

2.
RULES for the Discovery of false PROPHETS: Or the Dangerous Impositions of the People called Methodists detected at the Bar of SCRIPTURE, and REASON.

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

U N I V E R S I T Y

At St. MARY's in OXFORD,

On WHITSUNDAY, 1758.

WITH A

P R E F A C E

IN VINDICATION of CERTAIN Articles proposed to the serious Consideration of the Company of *Salters* in LONDON:

AND AN

A P P E N D I X

Containing authentick *Vouchers*; from the Writings of the *Methodists*, &c. in Support of the CHARGE, which has been brought against them.

By JOHN FREE, Doctor in Divinity, &c.

— Καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλῶντες δια-
γραμμαίνα, τὸ ἀποσπᾶν τῆς μαθητῶν ἐπίσω αὐτῶν.

Act. xx. 30.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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2 R R O N

UNIVERSITY

R R O N

UNIVERSITY

T O T H E
 Most REVEREND FATHER in GOD,
T H O M A S,
 By Divine Providence,
 LORD ARCHBISHOP
 O F
C A N T E R B U R Y,
 PRIMATE, and METROPOLITAN of all
 E N G L A N D, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I SHOULD not have Presumed to have troubled YOUR GRACE with this *Dedication*, but that I think there are some *Occasions*, when the Interest of the common *Cause*, and the mutual *Relation* which the *Supporters*, and *Defenders* of that Cause bear to each other, may require more of Intercourse, and *Communication* between *Superiors* and *Inferiors*, than may be necessary in *peaceable* Times, and the *ordinary* Course of Things.

YOUR GRACE is by your *Station*, as well as your *Affection*, to be esteemed the present FATHER of the Church of *England*: And therefore, considering both your *Authority* and good *Disposition* towards us, it is no Wonder, that your *Clergy* should apply, as they see a Necessity, for such *Indulgences*, as may forward their *honest* Endeavours, and which, I dare say, YOUR GRACE will never withhold, I mean your *Concurrence*, *Counsel*, and *Protection*.

As there seems to be this Privilege allowed Your *Clergy*, I thought there was an *absolute Necessity* at Present to use it; and pathetically to lay before YOUR GRACE, the *Conduct* and *Disposition* of an *Enemy*, which through the Negligence of some Persons, who should have been more up-
 2 on

on their Guard, have by *secret* Advances, so far *stolen* upon the *common* People, as to seduce *many* of all *Denominations* from their proper *Pastors*, and aided by this *mixed* Multitude to threaten the CHURCH of ENGLAND, the *Bulwark* of the *Protestant* Cause, with a general *Alteration*, or total *Subversion*.

To such a Pitch of *Insolence* are they arrived, that YOUR Clergy are often interrupted by these *Enthusiasts* as they pass the Streets, and told to *their Faces* by the lowest and most ignorant Wretches, that they know nothing of the *true* GOSPEL; and what still shews a greater Contempt of our *Establishment*, we are the more subject to these *Indignities* and *Disturbances*, when we appear in that *Dress*, which the *Laws* and *Customs* of this Country assign us, to distinguish us as *Servants* of the *Staté*, in the now *sad* Capacity of Ministers of the *falling* CHURCH of ENGLAND.

The *Vulgar* in the *capital* Cities, and the Body of *Artizans* in the most *populous* trading Towns are mostly in the Hands of these People: And their *Purses* being likewise at their Command, they want no Advantages, that Money can give them, for *printing* and *distributing* GRATIS, their lying, blasphemous, and delusive Pamphlets, to the remotest Corners of the Land; while many of the *laborious* *honest* CLERGY, who do the Service of this *Capital*, through the ill Returns of *Abuses*, *Depression*, and *Neglect*, not having a *common* Subsistence, can have no Superfluity to expend in the publick Service, and therefore can by no Means support at their own Cost, the Expence of *Apologies* and *Defences* from the Press.

Such being the *prostrate*, *miserable* State of the Church, and *those*, who used to defend it, and such the *triumphant* State of its *Enemies*, I cannot see how any Order of Men in the *English* PRIESTHOOD, though they do not stand in the *Breach*, can expect for their Tameness any better *Security*, or longer *Continuance* than the Rest: While this *Turbulence* remains, they all subsist as it were at *Mercy*, and in the *general* Defection of the People, YOUR GRACE and those of YOUR ORDER will fare no better than those of *our own*. For notwithstanding their Lying Professions, at certain Seasons, the Leaders of these People shew by their Practices, recorded in their own Writings, that they care no more for the *Ordination* of our BISHOPS, than for the Prayers

D E D I C A T I O N.

III

Prayers, and *Sermons* of the Priests. Our Picture-Shops in much Pomp, exhibit with the Portraits of Mr. *Wesley* and Mr. *Whitfield*, the Effigies of several reverend Preachers of the Gospel, as they are there styled, who never appeared before YOUR GRACE, when Bishop of *Oxford*; and set as light by your Authority, in your high Station of ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY, and *Metropolitan* of ALL ENGLAND.

In the *remote* Counties of *England*, I have seen at one Time a whole *Troop* of these Divines on Horseback, traveling with each a *Sister* behind them*, who being near the Lord (as they choose to phrase it) opened her Mouth upon Occasion to confirm what was spoken.

These Dispositions to Ferment and Commotion universally encouraged, and artfully improved, may at a *Crisis*, suddenly bring about such a Change in our *Church-System*, as may much alter the *Constitution* of the *State*. My LORD, permit me here to whisper a *Word*, that may be worth remembering. The *Kings* of *England* will never find so firm a Support from any Establishment, as they have experienced, since the Reformation, from the *Church* of *England*. And if in our Memory some of the *Priesthood* have not proved so good *Subjects*, as might have been expected, till they have been bought over with *Preferments*, that were due to other *People*, this has been entirely owing to the *Mismanagement* of some of our *Statesmen*, who being solely attentive to particular Points of their own, and Masters of little more, were either not sufficiently acquainted with the Force and Extent of our popular Prejudices, or not greatly disposed to remove them †.

My

* *Sister Williams* being near the Lord, opened her Mouth to confirm what was spoken. See the late BISHOP of LONDON's *Observations on the Conduct, &c. of the Methodists*.

† If they had been so disposed, what so obvious as to have ordered a *short Account* of his MAJESTY's *antient Pedigree*, and such *Elements* of our *English* History as might have shewn whence we come, and who we were, to have been used publicly in *Schools* and other Places of *Education*? This one Method, if taken in Time, would have long ago prevented all the Prejudices of *Jacobitism*, or *Disaffection* on the Score of the *Succession*, in the most *ancient Royal House* of *Lower Saxony*.

For

My LORD, I do not pretend to have any *particular* LICENCE to speak thus freely to Your GRACE, except that from the Considerations before mentioned, I believe it to be my Duty. I beg Pardon if I am mistaken about it: But I do believe it to be my *Duty*, and every Man's Duty, who is of my Order and Profession, to represent to Your GRACE the dangerous State of our *national* Religion: And this naturally led me just to mention, how far the Strength and Prosperity of the Church might contribute, upon Occasion to the Welfare and Support of the State, when it happens to be in a tottering Condition. And to be particular, I believe, his MAJESTY owed the Preservation of his CROWN and DIGNITY in the late *Rebellion*, next to those, who fought at *Culloden*, as much to the Steadiness and Activity of the *well-affected* CLERGY of the Church of ENGLAND, as to any Body of Men in his Dominions, notwithstanding the base Returns, which some of them have since met with from his *unprofitable* SERVANTS.

Such being the Advantages, which the *State* may gather from the *Church*, it would be strange if such an *essential* Part of our *Constitution* should be altogether neglected, because some People do not know the Use of it. Succeeding Politicians may be sensible of the want of it, and curse the Ignorance of their Predecessors, who suffered that Weight or Counterpoise to be lost from the Orb of Government, which they may in vain endeavour to restore.

But to omit dwelling on the Use and Excellence of the Church, I return to my Subject, *i. e.* to consider of the

For besides the old Connexions, it would have appeared from hence, that the Family of the *Plantagenets* were Possessors of the Crown of *England*, more than 200 Years before the House of the *Stewards* had any Connexion with the Crown of *Scotland*. The Rights of this elder House of *Plantagenet* all centered in MAUD *Plantagenet*, who married HENRY the *Lion*, Duke of *Saxony*. So that the younger House of *Steward* could have no just Title; while her *Issue* were subsisting, which has continued in a regular Succession of the DUKES of *Brunswick* down to his present MAJESTY: While the Succession in *England* from the Time of *John* (which drew into it the House of *Steward*) has been often interrupted by, *Usurpation*, *Bastardy*, *Murder*, and *Confusion*. See more of this in the Author's Sermon upon the Terms of national Unanimity, sold by W. Sandby.

Means

D E D I C A T I O N.

V

Means for it's Preservation—This, which I have been relating, being the true, but lamentable State of Things, whatsoever Hopes YOUR GRACE may conceive of remaining unmolested in *Your High STATION*: It is impossible, that we should find Peace or Security a Day in ours. These People occupy the very *Spot of Ground*, wherein it is our LOT to labour, we cannot be *unequally yoked with Unbelievers*, * the Holy Scripture forbids, that we should. We profess to believe in *Jesus Christ*, that was born in *Betlehem*: But they tell us, that † *all the Actions of this Jesus are in vain to us, a meer Tale, and a meer Song*: That the *real Christ* is another, (the Creature of *Enthusiasm* and mad Imagination) which they feel *beginning* to be conceived in them, as *Virgins*, and then *stirring* to be born. Our *Christ*, we say, was born *first*, and then *crucified*; but theirs, it seems, was *crucified* first, and then *born*. Faith with us is a rational Assent to the History of *Jesus Christ*, as recorded in the Holy Gospel, always attended with a suitable *Practice*: Theirs, according to *some*, abhors the *Name of Practice*, is a Thing by their Description never to be understood, the monstrous Birth of deformed *Fancy*, with such a Variety of Faces, as never to appear the same, and with *Hands and Feet*, and why not *Legs and Arms*? †

My LORD, an honest *sober* Mind must be shocked at these *infernal* Devices, these strange IDOLS of a *new JESUS*, and a *new FAITH*. If such wild Notions were propagated only in our *high Ways and Hedges*, they must soon be attended with fatal Consequences. But what shall we say, if the *Heathen are come into our Inheritance*, and have *Permission to occupy our very Churches*? Would any *Earthly Power*, at

* *For what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? And what Communion hath Light with Darkness? And what Concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what Part hath he that believeth with an Infidel? And what Agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols? For ye are the Temple of the living God.* 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15, 16.

† The Mystery of Christ crucified, &c. by ROGER BALLS, Minister of the Gospel, from Sandwich in KENT. Newcastle: printed for, and sold by the Publisher.

† “ If we deprive their FAITH of it's *Hands, Feet*, and every Idea of *Motion*, we shall be at the greatest Loss to know what it is.”

See a plain Account of Faith in *Jesus Christ*, in Remarks on several Passages, in the Letters on *Theron and Aspasio*.

W^{at}

War with another, suffer the *Enemy* to erect their *Batteries* within their *Walls*? Or trust them with the keeping of the *Citadel*?—WE CANNOT AS PRIESTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND STAND STILL, AND BEHOLD SUCH A PIECE OF TREACHERY AS THIS. We must apply to our *Commanders*,——If YOUR GRACE, and my LORDS the BISHOPS have not Power sufficient to afford us Redress,—We must apply to Parliament.

HIS MAJESTY by the OLD * OFFICE of the KINGS of ENGLAND, and, I doubt not, by his *Coronation-Oath*, is bound to *reverence* and *support* the Church of ENGLAND: As this is an *Obligation*, of which he is truly sensible, and to which during the long Course of his AUSPICIOUS Reign, he has hitherto strictly adhered, it would be using him extremely ill, not to give him proper Information, that there are a new Set of People, some of which *officiate* in our Churches, offering such *Indignity* to his CROWN and GOVERNMENT, as to make the *National Religion*, which he has so solemnly taken upon him to *defend* from those, who would do it *Injuries*, no better than an *Atheistical*, *immoral*, and *delusive* SYSTEM.

These are our *Complaints*, My LORD, and this our *Situation*. In *Perils* from *without*; but most immediately as we conceive, in *Perils* from *within*, among FALSE BRETHREN; from whom, for the *Security* of the *Flocks* committed to our Charge, for the Honour, Welfare, and Preservation of this CHURCH and KINGDOM, we desire an *entire*, and *Speedy* SEPARATION.

Reposing therefore on Your GRACE's just *Discernment*, *Goodness*, *Humanity*, and *Integrity* in YOUR SACRED TRUST.

I remain, MY LORD,

(having the Honour to be a PRIEST of the Church of ENGLAND,)

Your GRACE's most obedient Son and Servant,

JOHN FREE.

* The Office of the KINGS of England, in the true *English* Laws of King Edward the Confessor, is thus described, *Rex quasi vicarius summi Regis ad hoc constituitur, ut Regnum Terram & Populum Domini, & super omnia sanctam Ecclesiam ejus veneretur & regat, & ab Injuriis defendat.*

T H E
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

WHOSOEVER has had any intimate Knowledge of that difficult Employment, which is so properly styled the *WORK* of the *Ministry*, must be convinced, that the *Conversation*, and *Writings* of a Person in our *Profession*, are often as necessary to the *Instruction* of his People, as the *Preaching* of a *Sermon*. For Discourses from the Pulpit being delivered in a *publick* Assembly, are of Necessity limited to *Rule*, and require a certain *Decorum*, which will not permit them to descend to Particulars, where Subjects appear to be too *low*, or *gross*; or, by Reason of the odd Humours of Mankind, *not quite so serious*.

Notwithstanding which, if these *Particularities* be of Weight sufficient to give Testimony in a Cause, they will claim a Place as *Evidence*; and on such Occasions, are by no Means to be omitted. For this Reason, I trouble the Reader with a *Preface*, and some *Notes* at the End, by way of *Appendix*, as containing Matters, which may affect the Argument, and are tolerable enough in such *Conversation Pieces*, though they could not be inserted at Length, in a *solemn* Discourse from the *Pulpit*.

The APPENDIX is a *Collection* of some of those *Anti-christian* Doctrines or *Delusions*, which are censured in the following *Sermon*, and justly imputed to the *Methodists*, as being for the most Part gathered by a *venerable* and *careful* Hand from their own Writings; what are added since, I take to be quite as *Authentick*.

B

The

The PREFACE has scarce any other View, but to facilitate the good Effects of the *Sermon*, by removing some groundless *Objections* and *Cavils*, which have been raised against the *Conduct* of the Author, on Account of the *Charge* he hath brought against the *Seet*, in a Pamphlet lately addressed to the Company of *Salters*, in *London*.

Which *Objections* have been transmitted to him chiefly by *anonymous* Letters, and such kind of *under-hand* Conveyances, and relate either,

First, To the *Cause* of the Author's opposing the *Methodists*, which they are pleased to date from the aforesaid Period, and attribute solely to *Self-Interest*.

Or *Secondly*, To the *Manner* of his doing it,—“that it was virulent.”—

Or *Thirdly*, To the *Use* of the Word *Methodist*, as a Term, which in their meek Prevarication they affect not to understand, and sometimes disclaim, being, as they say, *true Sons of the Church*.

Fourthly, To the *Matter* of the Charge, (supposing that they are *Methodists*)—“that it has no Proof, and is without Foundation.”

To all these *Objections* I shall briefly answer in the Order, in which they stand.

And *first*, For the *Cause* of the Author's opposing the *Methodists*, which, they would insinuate, was solely owing to *Self-Interest*, and date from the *Time* of his Address to the *Salters*.

Now this is begging the Question.—For to suppose, that my Motive to withstand them, was *Self-Interest* alone; is to suppose the *Methodists* to be quite a blameless Set of People, and therefore innocent of the Charge, which I brought against them, which Innocence however remains yet to be proved, and will, as I conceive, for ever remain so.

This being the Case then, there might be other Motives for Opposition on my Part, beside *Self-Interest*: And it will be but candid in the Reader to hear, and judge, whether they were such Motives, as ought in Conscience to be resisted, or obeyed. It is plain, in the first Place, that the *Methodists* would delude him, in supposing my Opposition to begin from the Time of writing to the Company of *Salters*: Because it can be attested by the *Congregations*, to which I preach, that for a Course of Years, ever since I have been their

Lecturer,

The P R E F A C E.

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Lecturer, I have always publicly opposed these People; especially when they happened to be admitted into the Churches, where I preach, as likewise, whenever it came to my Turn to enter those, where by the *Anarchy* of the Times, they had found either Reception, or Continuance. This Practice was grounded upon a Notion, that it was my Duty, I thought, I acted in the Character of an *Apostolick* Minister of JESUS CHRIST, *who was manifest in the Flesh to Destroy the Works of the Devil*; of which *DELUSSION* is the chief. This, then appearing to be consistent with my Function, was I to depart from my *Duty*, because, in the Opinion of these People, it happened to be my *Interest*? I think not—Would any of these *Saints* be guilty of the same Thing in the same Circumstances? In their *Sphere* of Action, is it not *Measure for Measure*? When they harangued in the *Fields*; did they ever forbear to *preach* to the Mob, for Fear, lest they should get the Pence of the *Mob*? Or did not the *Pence* and the *Preaching* go Hand in Hand together?

But how little I was biassed by *Interest* in this Affair, the Reader will judge, after I have told him Circumstances. The Fact was this; when I came to enquire about a *Lecture-ship*, which by Report, was vacant, and in the Gift of the Company of *Salters*; I was informed, that there were already two Candidates; the one, an *Orthodox* Clergyman, the other, a *Methodist*; that many of the *Salters* had promised the *Methodist*, their Votes, some *unwarily*, others with a very singular Declaration, which plainly discovered the Influence of a lurking Acetuser of our Brethren, to wit; “that they would encourage no *Clergyman*, but what should “preach the true Gospel, according to the *Articles* of the “Church of England.” This, notwithstanding the high Discernment of these Gentlemen, I knew, was not the Practice of the People, called *Methodists*, and therefore, that their Zeal might be conducted by *Knowledge*, I thought it my *Duty*, to undeceive them, and that they ought to have been undeceived by what I wrote, I leave it to any Man, who professes himself a Christian, upon reasonable Principles, to be the Judge.

This, then, I declare to be the true and principal Reason of my publishing the Pamphlet to the *Salters*, and very consistent it is, with the Concern I therein expressed for their Honour and the publick Good. For if it had been reported,
that

that the *Orthodox* Clergyman had possessed their Esteem more extensively than the *Methodist*; I am confident, that all the World, who knows me, will believe, that I should never have given the worshipful Company or myself the Trouble of an Address in Print; or even have offered the least Opposition to the other, (I mean the *Orthodox*) Gentleman.

Having thus vindicated from *Aspersions*, and low *Calumny*, the *Motives* which gave Occasion to the aforesaid *Pamphlet*, I shall now consider the *Objections* to the *Manner* of it, &c.—as that it is written “with Bitterness of Spirit, and extreme “Virulence of Language, that it tells some People,” (we are by and by to consider whom) of their acting in open and “scandalous Opposition to the Church of *England*,—with “Blasphemy,—and diabolical Phrenzy—in giving our *Saviour* the Lie,—with Impiety in releasing Men from their “natural Fears of a Deity—and making Room for all Manner of Vice and Villainy—(by which the World is left to “infer) that they are not only guilty of *Atheism*, but in “some Sort, of *Treason* against the State, &c.”—

But if all this be *true*, why should it not be said? The *SCRIPTURE* declares (*Gal. iv. 18.*) that it is our Duty to be zealously affected in a good Thing. And can there be any Thing better than the Cause of God?

Where this is concerned I am not to regard the *Persons* of MEN, or treat with Gentleness, Meekness, Mildness, those, who with the Face of Meekness, are doing the Work of *Atheists*, but I am rather to shew the Sincerity of my Faith, by (what they are pleased to consider as it's Reproach) the Heartiness of the Zeal, wherewith I oppose them. This will lay me under a Necessity of using such Words, whether they sound agreeable or not, as by the common Consent of Mankind belong to such and such *Persons*, or such and such Things. Which is the Practice of all honest Men, and which, as they found Occasion, was the Practice of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*,

* Κρήτες αὐτὸν ψεύσαντες κατὰ ὁμολίαν γαστέρας ἀπέχρησται.

* This is a Verse of *Epimenides*, a Greek Poet, which *St. Paul* has inserted into his Epistle: If the Reader has a Mind to see the Meaning of it in *English Verse*, it is much to this Purpose;

Eternal Liars all the Cretans are:

And such dull Beasts—as thou must never spare. TITUS i. 12.

Said

The PREFACE.

v

Said St. PAUL to *Titus*; and therefore he bids him to rebuke them sharply. Supposing then, that I may observe the same Conduct towards the same Sort of People, *I stand fast in † the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free, (Gal. v. 1.)* to pull off the *Cloak of Hypocrisy* from these deluding Wretches, and hold out to the WORLD, as I detect them, the undeniable *Tokens* of their *Baseness*, and *Deceit*.

Of which the Reader may take a *Specimen*, from their Manner of forming the above *Objection*. For what I have said of—"scandalous Opposition to the Church of England"—"Blasphemy—Impiety—&c."—is charged upon the *Profession* of *Methodism* in general, I use no *personal* Reflections upon Mr. V——, nor any *Invective* against him, but in the *Character* of a *Methodist*: The Man that insinuates the Contrary, is guilty of a wilful Attempt to deceive the Publick; but a wilful Attempt to deceive, is in the Phrase of the *English* Translation of Scripture—a *Lie*. I think the Person here concerned cannot but acquiesce in this *Expression*: Because he seemed offended at, what he calls, *unscriptural* JARGON, and therefore I use this Word, as plain enough to be understood, and as being withal a *Word of Scripture*.

But not to leave the *Argument* for the Sake of attending so scrupulously to the *Diction*, I must observe again, that all the "Defamation, Obloquy and Reproach, with which I have been said to treat this *Reverend, and worthy Clergyman*," amounts only to the Charge of *Methodism*, which in another Place is reputed a very honourable Charge, at least, in the Opinion of this *Apologist*: But if so, I can see no Reason, why he should complain. For if *Defamation* be the greatest *Honour*, what can be a greater *Honour* than *Defamation*? An ordinary Reader perhaps, may be a little at a Loss, as to the Grounds, upon which he is to assent to this, not knowing whether it be the *common Sense* of a *Methodist*, or his *Inspiration*.

But it seems we must not bear too hard upon the Name of *Methodist*, since they take it to be a very *simple inoffensive harmless* Appellation.—So may the Name of *Jesuit* appear to *Jesuits*, or that of *Inquisitor* to *Inquisitors*, and if you look to the *first* Meaning of the Words, there may be no Harm in either; but yet on Account of certain bad *Arts* and *Practices* attributed to Men of these *Denominations*, they are neither of

† This, I hope, is a proper Reply to the Persons who thought themselves witty in the Application of my Name. them

them, here considered as amiable *Characters*. And for the same Reason, though a *Methodist* may pretend to have a good Opinion of his Name, it may turn out in the End to be not quite so *harmless* as some, which he, or I could mention. As for Instance—*little Mechanick*—great—SCHOOL—BOY, or little—SCHOOL—MASTER.

And therefore, since we have hit upon it, let us here in the *third* Place, dwell for a short Time, upon the Subject, and see what we can make of the Name of METHODIST.

To the Reproach of our *University*, we are obliged to confess, that the *Enthusiasm* of the *Methodists* began at OXFORD. The Name was first given to a few particular Persons, who affected to be so uncommonly *Methodical*, as to keep a Diary of the most insignificant and trivial Actions of their Lives; such perhaps, as how many Slices of *Bread* and *Butter* they eat with their *Tea*, how many *Dishes* of *Tea* they drank, how many *Country-dances* they called at their *Dancing-Club*; or after a *Fast*, the Number of *Pounds* they might devour of a Leg of Mutton. For upon these Occasions they eat like Lions—which afforded Matter for *Speculation* among their Neighbours, as they could not easily comprehend, how People, by making themselves so uncommonly *voracious*, could be *better* prepared for any *Offices* of RELIGION.

From what *constitutional*, or other Causes it might happen, would be tedious to enquire; but it was not long before these Gentlemen, from indulging their *Whims* in private, began to dogmatize in a *publick* Manner; they encreased their Society by engaging some raw young Scholars, and felt a strong Inclination for new *modelling*, *retrieving*, *meuding*, or in one Word, *reforming* almost every Circumstance, or Thing, in the System of our *national* Religion.

And as they were the very same Gentlemen, who had been *whimsical* in Private, that were now grown *dogmatical* in Publick, the People still called them the METHODISTS—by which was then, and is now generally understood by all, who are not of their own Perswasion.

The Definition
or Character of
those People, ex-
plaining, what is
usually meant by
METHODISTS.

A Set of *Enthusiasts*, who under the Pretence of being true Members of the Church of England, either prevent its DOCTRINES relating to *Faith*, and *Works*, and the *Terms* of Salvation, so as to make them *repugnant* to the Holy *Scriptures*; or else offend against the ORDER and DIS-

CIPLINE.

CIPLINE of the Church, or farther, even attack the *Principles* of natural Religion, and still under the *Pretence* of being Members of the Church of *England*, or at least Christians.

This is a Description of their *Character*. And as a *Shibboleth* to distinguish them, whenever they pretend to conceal themselves under such a fair Profession, one may throw out *this*, or such like *Proposition*.

By the Terms of the GOSPEL, *good Works* are absolutely necessary to obtain Salvation through *Jesus Christ*, and affirm the same to be the *Doctrine* of the Church of *England*: If they have not the Face to deny it to be the Sense of Scripture, they will immediately fall to quibbling or raising such Difficulties from some Parts of the Book of Common Prayer or Homilies, as shall shew; that they will not allow it to be the *Doctrine* of the Church. For whether it is, that they think, that by this Method they shall hamper their Adversary sooner, they seem to pay an higher Regard, on these Occasions, to *Articles* and *Homilies*, than to the Scripture itself, though the Compilers of those *Articles* and *Homilies* pretend to no Authority but from Scripture, and had *Honesty* enough to declare, that they required no Regard to be paid to their *Articles* any farther, than as they should appear to be consistent with Scripture; and maintained such *Interpretations* of that Scripture, as shall keep it consistent with itself. This is the *Foundation* upon which they build their Structure, never intending it should be put to any such Uses, as might weaken this Foundation; and therefore to convince these People, that even this boasted Retreat will afford them no Shelter, and that they must turn out again, as having no Right of Sanctuary with us, one may shew them to themselves, and to the World, by affirming it to be the *Doctrine* of the Church of *England*, that *good Works* are absolutely necessary to Salvation, and by Arguing thus from the very *Articles*.

Major. { What are absolutely necessary to a saving Faith,
are absolutely necessary to Salvation.

Minor. { Good Works are absolutely necessary to a saving
Faith.

Conclusion. { Therefore Good Works are absolutely necessary
to Salvation.

Proof of the Minor.

Major:

- Major.* { What are inseparable from a *saving Faith*, are
 absolutely necessary to a *saving Faith*.
Minor. { Good *Works* are inseparable from a *saving*
Faith.
Conclusion. { Therefore Good *Works* are *absolutely necessary*
 to a *saving Faith*.
 Proof of the *Minor*.
Major. { What *necessarily* spring from a *saving Faith*,
 are inseparable from a *saving Faith*.
Minor. { Good *Works necessarily* spring from a *saving*
Faith.
Conclusion. { Therefore, Good *Works* are *inseparable* from a
 a *saving Faith*.

Here the *Minor* needs no Proof, if we are to give Credit to the twelfth * Article: Unless People make any Distinction between a *true and lively* and a *saving Faith*, which yet I never heard of. This may be the Way then to discover the ORIGINAL *Methodists*, who it seems for *Distinction's* Sake affect to call themselves *Methodists* of the Church of England.

By which however they plainly inform us, that there are others of their *Body*, who do not profess to belong to our *Communion*: And therefore it is just to infer that the *Methodists*, who take our Name, do notwithstanding disavow *something*, which these disavow; and embrace *something*, which they embrace; and therefore by acknowledging them as *Namesakes* and *Brethren*, give themselves the Lie, (which they are not ashamed to do) when they say, that they are entirely with us, and of *no other Communion*.

For such *Coalition* is *Communion*, and these *Connexions*, and *Communications* will be the Cause, why *Dissenters*

* It appears then by this *Article* of the Church of England; that good *Works* are *absolutely necessary* to Salvation. And therefore the Word alone in the *preceeding Article*, is not to be considered as a *Particle* totally *exclusive*, but rather *conclusive*, and denoting *Eminence*, as making *Faith* the *Crown-work* of Salvation, by the same *Figure* as when we say, in common Speech, such an one is the *only Man*, by which we mean the *chief* Person for such a Purpose. This Interpretation cannot be denied, unless these People intend to make the *Articles* contradict each other, as they do the *Scriptures*.

may

may be called *Methodists*, though they are not the *primary* Objects of my *Definition*, though they may not be allowed as such by the *original* METHODIST, nay, though HE and THEY may be so far at Variance, upon *some Points*, as to be engaged in *Controversy*, one against the other. I say notwithstanding this, the World will call these *Methodists*, and I think pretty *justly*. For really they know not what else to call them: They imagine that they *went out* from them at the first; they find that they still hold some similar Tenets, have *personal* or *corporate* Attachments, and only upbraid each other, as swerving from some Doctrines wherein, as in a *common* Cause, it was expected, that they should have been agreed; though otherwise *Dissenters* by Name, and perhaps of several Denominations.

The World then calling them *Methodists*, nay perhaps the very *dissenting* Congregations, to which they belong, giving them that Title, Custom obliges me to do the same, though strictly speaking they are not of the *first* Order, but rather what we may call *Methodistical*, than *Methodist*.

If I take Notice of any of these People, or their Writings, it is in this secondary Character, as they are connected with *Methodists*: For in their old Character as *Dissenters*; since they meddle not with me, I give them no Disturbance, they are tolerated by the Laws of the Land to dissent from us, and are, or *should be*, under the *Direction* of their proper *Pastors*.

Who, if they be Men of *Prudence*, and concerned for the *general* Credit of Religion, will think it their Duty, as we think it ours, to prevent such Delusions from passing under the Name of *Christianity*, as may bring it into utter Contempt, and hinder every *wise* Community from giving it either *Establishment*, or *Toleration*.

To compass that End, was the Labour of all those *Infidel* Books, which for the last thirty Years, learned and pious Christians have been employed in answering, so that it would be a Circumstance deplorable indeed, if what *Atheists* and *Infidels* begun, *nominat* and *deluded* CHRISTIANS should have Permission, to combine, to finish.

And thus much of the *Origin* and *Name*, and the more *general* Divisions of the *Methodists*, appearing as *Churchmen*, or *Dissenters*, and of the *Marks* whereby they may usually be distinguished.

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If any of the FOUNDERS of this Sect, assisted by a greater Share of Learning and Sagacity than the Rest, or happier Mutability of Genius, or the Advantage of independent Circumstances, which will enable Men to speak the Truth, have found a fair Opportunity to renounce and disclaim the Opinions, with which they once were charged, I think as they depart from the Notions, they may be permitted, if they desire it, to lay aside the Name, and take another.

While on the contrary, the *Snakes* in our Bosom, who whether by *Neglect*, or *Collusion* are crept into our Churches, as they shall appear by their *Conversation* and *Writings* to be of that *Tribe*; notwithstanding their double Dealing, in denying it, ought constantly to be comprehended under that Denomination, and shewn to the World in their proper Character.

For these are all *Methodists*: And rather more dangerous, as they raise no Suspicions of that Sort among the deluded common People, while they assume legal Titles, and pass with them for *Rector* of—*Vicar* of—*Master* of—&c. and add, that they only preach the *true Gospel*, and are the *true Ministers* of the Church of *England*.

No wonder then, that they should be so much disturbed at the Author's Pamphlet, which charges them with such *Doctrines*, as he proves to be *contradictory* to the *Gospel*, contradictory to the Church of *England*, full of *Blasphemy*, and *Impiety*, and ending in downright *Atheism*.

This leads me to the fourth Thing, which I proposed to speak to, in the Preface, namely the *Manner of the Charge*, which was brought against them in the *Articles*, proposed to the *SALTERS*, which Charge they say, has no *Proof*, or *Foundation*.

I have received some anonymous Letters, and one almost anonymous Pamphlet from the *Methodists*, very express to this Purpose. They style themselves indeed *Members* of the Church of *England*, as I have just observed to be their Practice: But beside that their Speech, or Doctrine all along betrays them, the very Occasion of their Writing discovers their real Character. For they would never have wrote to me, if it had not been in Defence of a Person, whom I treated as a *Methodist*, and as they have given themselves so much Trouble to defend a *Methodist*, it is a Proof sufficient, that they are People of the same Persuasion.

Having

Having thus discovered to the Reader, who these *Objectors* are, it may not be amiss to acquaint him with the *principal Articles* of the Charge, which they object to; and then he will soon be able to determine, whether that Charge be at all weakened by their *Outcry*, or whether, on the contrary, it be not totally confirmed from the very Papers, that contain their *Objections*.

I. Among other Things then, I had said in the Pamphlet, aforementioned—"that the *Methodists* openly opposed "a *fundamental Article* of the Church of *England* by so expounding Scripture as to make it contradict itself."

II. I had charged them likewise with "*Blasphemy* and "*Impiety*, or diabolical *Phrenzy*, in daring to contradict our Saviour's Authority, and that too in a Passage, which comprehends such an essential Article of Religion, as the "*Judgment of the World*."

III. Further I had observed, "that to contradict our Saviour in the Doctrine there advanced, concerning the Nature of a future Judgment, was not only such an Offence to him, as was before mentioned, but that it tended likewise to destroy the *essential Attributes* of God and ruin his *Character* as Judge of the World."

In Support of the *first* Accusation, I had said, it was notorious, "that the *Methodists* explained the Word *Faith*, "as it stands in some of *St. Paul's* Writings in a Manner so different from the clear Declaration of *St. James*, as to make the Doctrine of one Apostle, a flat Contradiction to the other, and that they affirmed it to be the Doctrine of Scripture, that a Man shall be saved by *Faith alone*, exclusive of good Works; by which we mean VIRTUE and MORALITY."

This Practice of theirs I said was *notorious*. They upbraid me however for not giving a *special Proof* of this *Notoriety*. But I believe few Men of common Sense ever attempted to prove a Thing that was *Notorious*, till such Time, as contrary to their Expectation, they met with People of such notorious *Impudence*, as to deny it. And then *Special Instances* may be necessary; not so much for the Conviction of others, as for a Reproof the Delinquents, and that this may have the greater Force, I shall here give the Reader this Man's own Account of the Thing, whereby he will be enabled to judge him, by his own Evidence.

You

You object (says he) Pag. 5. of the Articles to the *Saliers*—That, “it is notorious, that the *Methodists*, under the “Mask of being true Sons of the Church, do ever explain “the Word Faith, as it stands in some of St. *Paul’s* Writ- “ings in a Manner so different from the clear Declaration “of St. *James*, as to make the Doctrine of one Apostle a “direct and flat Contradiction to the other”.—To this he replies.

“Sir, I affirm this Charge from Beginning to End, to be “notoriously false. One Circumstance is wanting there, “the Proof, the Proof Doctor. Where is that Proof to “support these Assertions? Which of the *Methodists* do “this?”

Why he tells me very triumphantly, p. 18, that for his own Part, he is one, and I leave it to the Reader to determine, whether he does not fairly comprehend the rest. “Therefore we conclude (says he) that a Man is justified, “his Sins pardoned, his Person accepted to God’s Love “and Favour, and his Title to Glory evidenced to him “by *Faith* without the Deeds of the *Law*, either *natural*, *ceremonial*, or *moral* (saith the much admired *Burket*)” &c. If this be not *exclusive* of good Works, no Language can express it.

But was there ever such hardened and unfeeling *Impudence* or *Stupidity* as this!—For a Person to *deny* a Thing with such a Degree of Confidence, and loudly to demand a Proof of it; and then a little after, with his own Mouth, and of his own Motion, in such a *particular* Manner to *confess* it to be Fact, and that he himself is of the same Opinion.

It is no Matter to me, whether this Man expresses his *Conclusion* in his own Words, or the Words of *Burket*. If he admire this *Profession* of *Burket’s*, by admiring, it is plain he likes it, and by liking, he makes it his own: And as such, it would have been taken by all Men of common Sense, if (exclusive of the high Admiration) he had only set it here in Support of his own Opinion. For if it does not express his Opinion, it could not have been cited to support it: And therefore if it is cited to support it, it expresses his Opinion. And that it should be so taken, he adds something yet *stronger*, the Meaning of which in plain *English* is, that we are justified by *Christ*, on Account of our *Sin* and *Wickedness*; and not
by

by being *Holy, Just, and Righteous Persons*. For which he quotes *Rom. iv. 5*.

I say then, the *Faith* of these People, which they pretend to gather from *St. Paul*, is quite opposite or contradictory to that of *St. James*, for he says that *Faith without Works is dead*, and produces no Salvation, they say that it produces Salvation, and is quite alive.

So much in Support of my first Charge, “ that the *Methodists*, under the Mask of being true Sons of the Church, “ do ever explain the Word *Faith*, as it stands in some of “ *St. Paul's* Writings in a Manner (or Sense) so different “ from that of *St. James*, as to make the Doctrine of one “ *Apostle* a direct and flat *Contradiction* to the other.”

Which is likewise openly and avowedly to oppose a *fundamental* Article of the Church of *England*; I say *Fundamental*, that they may learn for the future, that the *Articles* are of very different *Importance*, and claim more or less of our Regard, in Proportion to the Clearness and Importance of their several Subjects.

Under the *second* ACCUSATION here mentioned, which charges them with *Blasphemy*, and *diabolical Phrenzy* in daring to contradict our *Saviour's* Authority—I observed, that “ our *Saviour* expressly declares the Works of Men to be the “ Object of his Judgment, the Matter of his *Consideration* or “ *Attention*, before he rewards or saves them: But the *Methodist* for the Perdition of the Souls of his Followers “ openly gives our *Saviour* the Lie, and says that the Works “ of Men are of no *Consideration* at all.”

What I here affirm however is most devoutly called in Question, by one of my *anonymous* Correspondents; who with great *Simplicity*, or very *steady Hypocrisy*, wonders, that I should charge the *Methodists* with denying the *Necessity* of good Works, in *Order to Salvation*, and desires me to retract it, as an unjust Aspersions.

Though at the same Time another is *Blasphemous* enough to tell me, that *our Works will never be brought to the Bar of God*. In direct Opposition, as I observed, to our *LORD's* Declaration, that at his *Tribunal*, he *shall reward every Man according to his Works*.

If the first mentioned of these Gentlemen, doubts the Truth of what is here related, as he seems to be a *civil* Person, he shall have the Perusal of the other's Letter, if he pleases;

pleases; and then for the Affair of *Retraſting*, he ſhall be my *Caſuiſt* in my Stead: But if this Propoſition cannot ſo conveniently be complied with, he may be ſatisfied by the *Declaration* of my Friend in *Print*, who comes ſo near the Sentiment of the other; that one would take him to be a *Commentator* upon the former's Doctrines. For one ſays, "that our *Works* will never be brought to the Bar of God:" The other tells us, that all St. James requires of us, is that we ſhould ſhow our *Works* to Men. This Gentleman may perceive then, that two of his *Brethren* are pretty ſimilar in their *Evidence*, and both againſt him. Having uſed this Paſſage as a *Teſtimony*, let us dwell a little upon the Senſe and Tendency of ſuch an Interpretation. St. James he ſays, ſpeaks of our *Works* as the *Juſtification* of our Faith in the Sight of Men, and that the ſhewing of them which he ſpeaks of, has no Relation to ſhewing them to God.—If this be not a *Diſtinction* without a Difference, it is a Diſtinction very *irreligious*. Is there any Thing that Men can ſee, which God does not diſcern? And if he diſcerns, does he not diſtinguiſh? Strange Things, muſt be replied here, to make a *Difference* in the Caſe, and prove that ſhewing our Works to Man, is not ſhewing them at the ſame Time to God. For if it be not ſo, God muſt be blind, or indolent, and have leſs Apprehenſion that ſome of his Creatures: And therefore I have no Opinion of this, which my *impudent Friend* calls a *Proteſtant* Diſtinction. If it be the Diſtinction of *Proteſtants*, they muſt be Proteſtants of his own *Complexion*: For we, who are truly of the Church of England abhor it; knowing it to be the old * Diſtinction of the *Epicurian* ATHEIST, and thus expreſſed by *Lucretius*, more than One Hundred Years before *Chriſt* was born.

*Omnis enim per ſe Divom Natura, neceſſe eſt,
Immortali Ævo ſumma cum Pace fruatur,
Semota ab noſtris rebus ſejunctaque longe.*

Lucret. De Rerum Natura Lib. 1.

And thus much for the *Reasoning* of the *Methodiſts*, and the *Validity* and *Uniformity* of their *Relations*. Out of three

* See the firſt Diſcourſe in a *Volume* of Sermons, preached by the Author, before the University at *Oxford*, and printed in *London*, in the Year 1750.

The P R E F A C E.

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of my Correspondents; *two* of them have witnessed against *each* other. *Two* in *Conjunction* against a *third*, and the *first* against *himself*.—Very pretty *Evidence* indeed!

Such Advocates must surely give Credit to a Cause: And I pray God to grant, that *Atheism* may never meet with better. For I believe the Reader will not scruple to give them the *Title* of *Atheists*: After I have produced one *Testimony* more from such Sort of Writers; wherein GOD is represented as being *Angry* with People, for attempting to be *virtuous*.—For that there is not, in the Estimation of the *divine* Being, any Distinction between VICE and VIRTUE. The Passages are these: “ He who attempts to do any
“ Thing easy or difficult, under the Notion of an Act of
“ believing, or any other Act, in Order to his Acceptance
“ with God, only heaps up more *Wrath* against him-
“ self.”*—And again,

“ The whole New Testament speaks aloud, that as to
“ the Matter of Acceptance with God, there is no Difference
“ between one Man and another:—No Difference
“ betwixt the most accomplished *Gentleman*, and the most
“ infamous *Scoundrel*:—No Difference betwixt the most
“ virtuous *Lady*, and the vilest Prostitute:—No Difference
“ betwixt the most Reverend Judge, and the most odious
“ Criminal standing convicted before him, and receiving
“ the just Sentence of Death at his mouth:—In a Word,
“ no Difference betwixt the most fervent Devotee, and the
“ greatest Ringleader in Profaneness and Excess.”

Now, not to *criticise* upon the FOLLY of this *Coxcomb*, for his awkward Affectation of the fine *Conversation-terms* of *Gentleman* and *Lady*; and introducing the *Ideas* of worldly Vanity and Politeness, into an awful *Scene*, from which, in the Nature of the Thing, they have been for ever excluded.—I say, to omit this *Folly* of the *Coxcomb*, or *Dulness* of the *Bloockhead*, I have something to observe of much greater Consequence.

For after a *Declaration* of such shocking *Principles* in a Manner so *explicit*, so *particular*, so *publick* as this: One might *solemnly* appeal—(for such Things are too bad to be overlooked or concealed)—to his MAJESTY as *Defender*

* See an Account of Faith in *Jesus Christ* in Remarks on several Passages, in the Letters on *Theron* and *Aspasio*.

of the Faith—to both Houses of Parliament, who as *Senators* of the Realm, are to look to all *national* Concerns, and consequently to the *Religion* of the Nation, as by Law established,—to the *Judges*, as those who are to notice, what Matters may *shake* the *Laws*, and dangerously *affect* the *State*—to the two Houses of Convocation, as *Guardians* and *Interpreters* of the DOCTRINES of the Church of England,—whether a Man who can publish *such Doctrine* as this, ought to be permitted to bear the *Name*, or execute the *Office* of a *Priest* of the Church of England?

For, if what this Man affirms be *true*, then is our Saviour a *Liar*, in supposing a *Distinction* to subsist between human Actions, and saying, that he will *reward every one according to his Works*.—If what this Man affirms to be *true*; there is no *essential Difference* between *Virtue* and *Vice*, and therefore no Occasion, here on *Earth*, for *national Priesthoods* to enforce *Virtue*, and preach *Repentance*.

No Occasion for my Lords, the *Judges*.—Because there is no Difference *between them*, and the *most odious Criminal*.

No Occasion for KING or *Legislature*, to prescribe *Laws*, and *Rules*, and *Ordinances*; because all Things being thus *equal* in the Sight of GOD, *Lawgivers*, who are only subordinate, have no Right to make a *Difference* in Opposition to his *System*; nor any Cause to shew, why they should decree Rewards and Honours to what is only *imaginary Good*, or Infamy and Vengeance to *imaginary Evil*.

When I had advanced thus far, I received a little Pamphlet from the Reverend Mr. *John Wesley*, entitled, *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Free*, calling likewise for proofs upon this Occasion. These which I have laid before the Reader, I imagine will give him satisfaction, both as to the Validity of my Assertions, and as to the Consequences, which I impute to the Publication of such Doctrines, which he allows, Page 7. to be *very true*, provided they (the *Methodists*) held *such Positions*: And therefore all the Reply I need to make at present, to this small Performance, may be comprehended in a *single Sentence*: To wit, that if he be not hereby convinced, that these *Positions* as he calls them, are held, and by People who pass under the Denomination of *Methodists*, and will please to signify that want of Conviction, in a private Letter, by the same Hand, which conveyed to me, the former Papers, he shall have the Civility of a particular

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particular Answer Paragraph by Paragraph, if he think it necessary.

But for some of the other poor Wretches, who have given themselves the Trouble of sending, and me the Trouble of receiving their miserable Compositions, as they are such, as St. Paul describes, People who know not *what they say, nor whereof they affirm*; I do not see that the Rules of *Christian Charity*, or common *Prudence* oblige me to take any further Notice of them, especially, as they forfeit the Claim of the Condescension due to Men of low Estate, by appearing in their own Conceit, to be so much wiser and more considerable than myself.

Having said thus much, to give the Reader some *Idea* of the *Times* and *Circumstances*; and the *Temper* of the Persons with whom I engage, I refer him to the *Sermon*, to learn the Rest.

Southwark,
June 14, 1758.

P. S. The Reader is desired to take Notice, that the Author's Controversy with the *Methodists* consists at present of Six Pieces, which make an *Octavo* Volume, bound together in the following Order.

- I. A Display of the bad PRINCIPLES of the *Methodists* in certain Articles proposed to the Consideration of the Company of *Salters*, &c.
- II. Rules for the Discovery of false Prophets, &c. A SERMON before the University of *Oxford*.
- III. Dr. *Free's* Edition of Mr. *Wesley's* First Penny Letter, &c.
- IV. His Edition of Mr. *Wesley's* Second Letter, &c.
- V. His Remark upon Mr. *Jones's* Letter.
- VI. His Speech at *Sion-College* to the *London Clergy*.

D

I Epist.

*Other Books, which have been written by the Rev.
Dr. FREE, and sold by William Sandby at the
Ship opposite St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-
Street.*

I HISTORY of the *English* Tongue, with the
Author's intended Dedication to his Royal High-
ness Prince GEORGE; now Prince of *Wales*, PART: I.
printed in 1749, and containing an Account.

- I. Of the *Roman* or *Latin* Tongue, as once spoken in
Britain.
- II. Of the *British* or *Welsh*, and it's antient, and present
Limits.
- III. Of the *Pyhtas*, corrouptly called *Picts*, by the RO-
MANS; their Settlement in the *North* of *BRITAIN*;
the *Original* of their *NAME* and the *Nature Ex-*
tent, and *Duration* of their *LANGUAGE*.
- IV. Of the *SCOTS* from *Ireland*; and the Extent of the
Eerfe Language; in order to distinguish it from the
English in the *North* of *BRITAIN*; which vulgarly
passes under the Name of *Broad Scotch*.
2. A *Volume* of *SERMONS* preached before the University
of *Oxford*, printed in 1750. With a *Preface* tending to re-
form some remarkably bad Practices, both in *Church* and *State*;
to the Neglect of which, we principally owe our present Mis-
fortunes.
3. *Political* *SERMONS*, and *DISCOURSES*, collected into one
Volume, under the Title of the *Sentiments* of a *True ANTI-*
GALLICAN; and dedicated to his *Royal Highness* the *DUKE*,
1756.
4. A *second* *ANTIGALLICAN* Sermon preached in the
Year 1756. upon the Terms of *National Unanimity*: With
a *Genealogical* Table, shewing his *MAJESTY's* antient Con-
nexions, with the Crowns of these Kingdoms, long antece-
dent in Time, to the Marriage of his Ancestor with the
Stewart Family.
5. *POEMS* upon several Occasions, the second Edition
1757, containing an *ODE* to the King of *Prussia*, an *ODE*
of *Consolation* to his R. H. the *DUKE*. *Jephtha* an Oratorio
set to Musick by Mr. *STANLEY*. Advice to the Fair
Sex, &c.

I Epist. of St. JOHN iv. 1.

Beloved believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.

TH O, there is nothing of greater Benefit to Mankind than *true* RELIGION, yet there has been infinite Mischief done under the *Colour* of it; when it has been made to serve the Purposes of *wicked* and *designing* Men: Or what is equally fatal, when it has covered the *Folly*, or sanctified the licentious Sallies of some deluding Zealot. Which ever of these can artfully join their Cause to the Cause of God, is generally sure to meet with Profelytes. For the Cause of God is what all good Men are willing and eager to espouse, while few have had an Education, which can enable them without the Assistance of others, to discern the Nature of the Thing proposed, under that interesting and sacred Name, and how little Connexion there may really be, between the Cause of God, that alarms them, and the sundry specious Follies and Intrigues of Men.

By this Means, the pityable Vulgar, whose Misfortune it is, to be deluded by Shews and Forms, have often received the Cheat or Mad-man, with the same Reverence which they
would

2 *A SERMON before the University.*

would pay to a Saint or a Prophet; and have been conducted by them as implicitly.

Some Centuries since, before *true* Christianity had got footing amongst us, our Ancestors were miserably under the Yoak of Impostors, and abused without End, by *lying Miracles*, and *pretended Revelations*. Indeed all along ever since we have been a Nation, the Spirit of Enthusiasm, hath with some *Variation* in it's Shape, appeared amongst us, at certain *dark* Times, and *sickly* Intervals, in the *Constitution* of the *State*, or the *Constitution* of the *People*. For these Things are some how connected in *Nature*. When the *Ignorance* of the Vulgar grows frantick, and is joined by an uncommon *Ferment* in their *Passions*, they soon grow weary of *old Rules and Orders*. It matters not whether they be *Civil* or *Religious*, that they first intrude upon. Since the same restless Folly, that opposes the one, can hardly leave the other without Disturbance. Those, who rebel against their lawful Governors, seldom spare their lawful Teachers, and those who deride their lawful Teachers, do sometimes *avowedly*, and always *virtually* oppose their lawful Governors. For why, in a Church by *Law* established, every *Minister* is in his Province, a *Civil OFFICER*, as well as *Ecclesiastical*, and consequently every Combination against the *established* Priesthood, is at the same Time an Attempt against the *civil* Government, and a

* ART. XXXIV. Of the Church of *England*. *Whosoever* through his private Judgment. &c.

real *Attack* upon the *Constitution*. Indeed such Attacks may not always deserve the Notice of the Magistrate, so far as to provoke him to Punishment, especially where the Adversary is insignificant, and the *Constitution* is in other Respects firm, and out of Danger. Punishment, where there is no Call for it, would be misapplied, and has sometimes been the Means of making small Disturbances, and weak Engines considerable: But when what was at first weak, is suffered through Negligence to grow so extensive in it's Operations, as to want only a little *Encouragement* and *Direction*, to give a Change to the whole *System*, both of our *Ecclesiastical* and *civil* Polity, the Case is very different; and will demand of the *Legislature*, their most serious Consideration. In the mean Time, it cannot be improper, in a Nation like ours, where every *Malignity* of Speaking and Writing, carries with it a most successful Infection, I say it cannot be improper for that Set of Men, whose Business it is, *to reprove and rebuke with all long-suffering*, to be watchful upon these Emergencies and not to pass over even *that foolish People, that dwell in Sichem*; but to prevent, wherever it may be apprehended, every Religious *Complaining in our Streets*. For this Reason, as it is a Precept best calculated for those Occasions; when the Disease affects the Skirts of the People, and the Complaints arise from the *deluded* Multitude, I chuse to dwell upon the Passage in my Text: Because it contains for the lower Sort; would they duly attend to it, Matter of such excellent Advice, and timely Information.

Belov ed,

Beloved, &c.

Now, because the Term *every Spirit*, supposes some Variety among them, and because, in Order to a Trial, they are to be separated and distinguished; this Distinction may be best apprehended, perhaps, by considering, as I shall, in the *first* Place.

The various Meanings of the Name and Appellation, and what is the Import of the Word *Spirit*, as it stands in different Passages of Scripture.

And because it is here suggested, that *Prophet* also, is the Name for a Person of a doubtful Character: I shall, in the *second* Place, be careful to explain,

SOME of the most remarkable Meanings, that are couched under that Appellation.

And then in the *third and last* Place, after these Explications of the Terms; one may be able, with greater Variety and Accuracy, to lay down certain *Rules for the Discovery*, and Conviction of *false Prophets*.

First, Then, I am to consider the various Meanings of the word *Spirit*, as it stands in different Passages of holy Writ.

1. The Word *Spirit* is called in the *Hebrew* (רוח) *Ruack*; in the *Greek* Scriptures. (πνεῦμα) *Pneuma*. The Word in it's *primary* Signification, means the *Air* we breathe; or simply the *Wind*. Thus it is said, * *the Breath of Man*

* Pl. clxiv.

goeth forth. The Prophet DANIEL † speaks of the four (*Ruchee* or) *Winds of Heaven*.

2. Beside, this *first* Meaning, the Word hath still, in several Acceptations a Respect only to *material* Objects; but in a *metaphorical* Sense, as when it means the *Temper* of the Man, and the *Habit* of the bodily Constitution: Thus we read of the *Spirit of Jealousy*, meaning a jealous Temper, a *Spirit of Infirmary*, meaning a long Sickness. ‡

3. Beside the *Bodily Temper*, it represents the *Frame* and *Constitution* of the MIND. Thus JOB says, the *Spirit of my Understanding*, forces me to answer, *i. e.* the *Temper* of my *Mind*, or the particular Apprehension, I have of Things, obliges me to reply to you. In a Sense not very unlike this, the *Spirit of Prophecy*, is sometimes to be understood, as meaning no more than the natural *Bent* and *Tincture* of the Understanding; a *Propensity* to some *Acts* of the *Prophetic* Office. Thus St. Paul admonishing that *unruly* Order, tells them, that it was in their Power, to govern their prophetic Temper, and conduct themselves by the *Rules of Decency*. For that *the Spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets*. The word *Spirit*, does sometimes denote also the *Disorders* of the *Mind*, as well as those of the *Body*. Thus the *Spirit of Error*, means the natural Blindness of the Understanding, which obliges People to be always stumbling. A Mad-

† 4 Dan.

‡ See Appendix, No. 1.

man, in the Old Testament, is called *Spiritual*. *The Days of Visitation are come*, saith *Hosea*, *Israel shall know it*, the *Fool* is the Prophet, and the *Madman* is the Man of the Spirit. And in the New Testament, we read of the *Wind of vain Doctrine*, which hath no better Meaning than that Passage of *Jeremiah* v. 13. where he says, *the Prophets shall become Wind, and the Word of the Lord is not in them*.

4. The word SPIRIT, by a *Metaphor*, means the *Soul* of Man, his *immaterial* and better Part.

5. It means other *immaterial* Beings as *God* and the *Holy Angels*; the *Devil* and his *Angels*.

6. It may signify the *immaterial Influence* of *God's Holy Spirit*, or that of any other Spirits upon the Souls of human Creatures, sometimes with a *Presage* of Futurity; at other Times it signifies a bare *Impulse* from any of these, upon the Will of a Man so as to alter for the present, his Behaviour, and this not attended with any *Presage* of Futurity.

7. Again, by the Word Spirit, the Scripture frequently expresses the Influence of *God's Spirit* alone, whether that be *Ordinary* or *Extraordinary*, and the *various Degrees* of either. There is generally though, something particular in the Phrase, by which each Kind, and the *various Degrees* of each KIND may be distinguished. The *extraordinary Influence*, is signified by such Expressions as these, *I will pour out of my Spirit—I was in the Spirit—The Spirit of the Lord came upon him—and this extraordinary Influence*

fluence is not always to the same Purpose, or for the same Continuance, and never exerted but upon very high and uncommon Occasions. The ordinary Influence amongst Christians, seems to be understood in such Phrases as these, *born of the Spirit*, shewing it to be a second Nature, and like other Things, which are born with us, in it's Intent, lasting. And in this View, we receive that other Precept, *Quench not the Spirit*. SPIRIT in this Sense is that Gift of God, which in all Ages of the Church, hath been common to all good Christians. There is nothing extraordinary, or miraculous in it's Operations. It is no more a Wonder in the *spiritual*, than the Blowing of the Wind in the *natural* World; it is always somewhere. And because it was to be of common Use, our Saviour gives us the following Description, and his infinite Wisdom, *who knew what was in Man*, knew for what Purpose he did it. * *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell, whence it cometh and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit*. By the Words in the Close of this Speech, it is plain, our Saviour meant it as an *Allusion* or *Comparison*. There must be a Similitude therefore between the *Spirit*, and the *Emblem*, under which our Saviour represents it. Of the Emblem itself, he says, we are in part ignorant. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth*

* John iii. 8.

—By this Sound of the Wind, which we are said to apprehend, are meant it's outward sensible Effects: The Noise caused by the Resistance or Fall of such Objects, as it blows against, of which Effects our *Reason* and *Senses*, our usual Faculties are the Judges. But what is that, of which we are ignorant? Why the Manner of its coming, and going. *Thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth*, and herein chiefly lies the Similitude, for it is added, *so is every one that is born of the Spirit*. The Marks of the Spirit therefore given us by our Saviour are sensible in the common Road, and if there be a Similitude in the Case, are to be discerned in the same outward Manner, as the Fall of a Tree, or the Wreck of a Ship, or any of those Accidents, which are known to be Marks and Effects of a *Tempest*. Now these Things are *visible*, and open alike to our own Observation, and often to the Observation of other People, who are Judges in part, as well as we, of every good Word and Work, that is manifest before them: Which good *Words* and *Works* are the only *infallible* Testimony of this Kind of Inspiration. Our Saviour says not a Word of any unintelligible *inward* Feelings, distorting *Agonies*, or frightful *Convulsions*. For these he knew might proceed from bodily Disorders; and *Enthusiasts* have no Mark to distinguish, when they do not. Whereas a good Life can proceed but from one Cause; and

there-

Word Spirit in Scripture.

6

therefore is a *solid Testimony* that * *God is with us*; a Testimony not only convincing to ourselves, but to all that are round about us. Judge therefore, from the Propriety and Safety of the one above the other, which our Saviour intended as the Mark of God's Holy Spirit; whether a precarious Conceit of a distempered Fancy, which may not abide by a Person the Compass of a Day, which sinks with the Alteration of the bodily Temper, and of the Grounds of which he can never convince another; or that which depends upon a reasonable Conviction backed by the joint Assent, and general concurring Suffrage of Mankind.

These seem to be the most remarkable Meanings of the Word *Spirit*, as it stands in different Passages of Holy Writ. They are, we find, widely *different* from one another; and in

* But not content with this, the *Methodists* have carried their Curiosity so far in hunting for extraordinary Marks, and Revelations, whereby to know the State of the Soul; that one of their Teachers, in Order to gratify their Humour, and take as great an Advantage of it as he could, is said to have *forged* a Letter, dated from the *Mansions above*, which he read without Shame in the Pulpit, to the People of St. Saviour's, Southwark. See it in the Appendix, No. 2.

But that these *Saints* may learn to wean themselves from a Curiosity no where authorized in Scripture, let them remember; that to determine upon the *final* State of Man's Soul, is only his *Prerogative*, who is the Sovereign Judge of the World.

And yet through the Licentiousness of these Times; every the meanest Person in common Life, every doating *old Woman*, every over-grown *Apprentice*, every new-sainted *Magdalene*, encouraged in their blasphemous Practices by those *Impostors*, shall place themselves upon the Tribunal of the Almighty, and deal out Damnation to their Fellow-Creatures,

This is such a *Presumption*, as is very offensive to the Honour of God, and the Order of Society, and therefore very deserving of publick Censure.

Number

Number sufficient to perplex ignorant People; who read with warm Heads, and a Lust of mis-applying, under the Conduct too of Teachers, who are to build their Success on such Advantages. The foregoing *Distinctions* as they plainly shew, that it is not every *Spirit*, that is to be credited, may be a Means of preventing that Confusion, which otherwise must arise from the promiscuous Use of a *Term*, which admits of such a Variety of Interpretations.

I now proceed to a *critical* Examination of the Word PROPHET, which Examination does therefore take the *second* Place; because generally speaking we must first discern the *Spirit* of a Man, of what Kind it is, before we can judge of his Qualifications as a *Prophet*, or know in what Rank to place him, supposing him in any Degree capable of that Denomination.

The Hebrew Word (נביא) is most probably derived from the Word (בוא) * Boh to enter. Whence this Name imports, the Person, that entered, signifying thereby his Entrance into some sacred Place † which was prohibited to the People,

* Numb. xi. 8, 9. In the Oriental Languages the Letters לוּן A, W, I, are often put for one another. This is as much a Rule in the Hebrew as the Arabick. In the Derivatives נביא prophet, and בִּיאָה Introitus, there is a ו for better sound's sake instead of a י. While again in the word נבואה Prophecia the Radical Letter has it's true Form, and plainly shews the Word's Original.

† Thus at Delphos,

τίς προφητεύει θεῷ;
 Ἡμεῖς τὰ γ' ἴξω. τῶν ἴσω ἄλλοις μέλει;
 Οἱ πλησίον δάσσεσσι τρίποδος, ξίτι,
 Δελφῶν ἀρεγυῖς.

Euripid. Jon.

At

ple, to whom at his coming out he reported some *Oracle*, or made some *Harangue*. From this last Part of the Prophetick Office, one of the *Rabbies* took Occasion to derive the Name from (נוב) a Root, which signifies *Elocution*, *Oratory*, *Preaching*.

The Word in the *Greek* Scriptures, which we retain in our Language, namely *Prophet*, signifies in it's Original, a *Foreteller* of future Events, but in it's usual Acceptation among the *GREEKS*, the *Chief of the Priests*, the Person, who presided in the Temple over the Rest, as chief Master of Religious Ceremonies, whether he gave out *Oracles* or not. Thus much of the Original, and most obvious Acceptations of the Words (נבִיא) *Nabih* and *Prophet*, let us now enumerate some of their *peculiar* Meanings, in particular Places of Scripture, as far as may concern our present Purpose. Be it observed previously to this, that the Name *PROPHET* in the *Hebrew*, taken from one *Verb*, soon gave Rise to another; a Thing common in other Languages*, and the Meaning of the new Verb extended not only to the principal Office of a Prophet, but also (according to the Genius of the *Hebrew* Language, which is barren in Words) to the minute Actions of Persons in that Character, and so if a Person wore the Garb of a Prophet,

At the Temp'le of *Jupiter Ammon*, there were the same Ceremonies,
Τὸς δ' ἄλλους—ἔξωθεν τῆς δεμιστίας ἀκροάσασθαι πλὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου.

Strabo. Lib. 17.

* נבִיא. Thus in *Greek* from προφήμι comes προφήτης, and
נבִיא, thence another Verb προφητεύω.
נבִיא,

eat like a Prophet, or prayed in their Manner; he was said in the *Hebrew* to act the Prophet, which we in *English* improperly render to *Prophecy*. It was necessary to make this Remark, because otherwise, when People read in the Bible, that such an one *prophefied*, they may be induced to think, that he was acting in the *highest* Part of that *Character*, and *foretelling* future Events: When perhaps considering the Person's whole Conduct, and History, we shall find but little Reason to believe his divine Inspiration.

Thus for Instance the *Prophets* of *Baal*, when they offered up the Sacrifice, which was to decide the Controversy between them and *Elijah* are said to have * *prophefied until the Time of offering the Evening Sacrifice*, by which is meant only, that they were so long in paying their *Idolatrous Devotions*. For thus the Text explains itself. *And they took the Bullock, that was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the Name of Baal from Morning even untill Noon, saying O Baal bear us. But there was no Voice, nor any that answered, and they leaped upon the Altar, which was made. And it came to pass at Noon, that Elijah mocked them, and they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their Manner with Knives and Lances, till the Blood gushed out upon them.* It is plain from hence, that People have been said to *prophefy*, when they have had *no Share* of divine Inspiration, when they have not been *foretelling* future Events, but only performing their ordi-

* 1 Kings xviii. 26, 27, 28.

nary Devotions, or doing some Act in the Manner, or in the Form of *Prophets* of this or that Denomination.

In this Sense it is, that *Saul* was said to *Prophesy*, and to be *amongst* the Prophets. The *Predicting* Prophets termed in the *New Testament*, *those who have spoken*, i. e. who foretold future Events, and were therefore called *Seers*, sustained also another Office of a civil Nature. They were generally at the Head of several Seminaries, and *Schools* of young Men, whom they taught to follow their own Way of Life, and Form of Devotion, and of whom they were therefore said to be the *Fathers*; Because they brought them up in this Way, and were sometimes succeeded by them, in the *holiest* Part of their Functions. Whoever frequented these Assemblies, and joined in any of their Actions, was said to be *of the Sons* of the *Prophets*, to *prophecy* and to *be among the Prophets*. And this, according to a learned and ingenious † Interpreter, is the Meaning of *Saul's* Prophefying, and most likely to be the true Meaning.

For tho' it be added, * that *the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt be turned into another Man*, yet this is not to be understood of the divine Influence, with the *Presage* of Futurity; but only of an *Impulse* upon the *Will*, so as to alter, for a Time, his Behaviour. For *Saul* by the Tenour of his Life was not esteemed over Devout, but rather a Despiser of Religious Ceremonies; and therefore by his sudden Attachment

† Warburton's Divine Legation of *Moses*, Vol. III. page 310.
1 Sam. x. 11.

* 1 Sam. x. 6.

to them, might well be said to be *turned into another Man*, though there was no other Change in his Character. But if from this Phrase, *the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon Thee*, there remain yet a Suspicion to any one that Saul in his Prophetick Temper, was rapt into *Futurity*, let us see the Force of the Expression in other Passages of Scripture.

It is said of JEPHTHA, that the *Spirit of the Lord came upon him*, and in Consequence of this what did he? * *Why he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead, he passed over unto the Children of Ammon*. And if we read his Character, he is said to be *a mighty Man of Valour, and the Son of an Harlot*: But he is no where said to have been a Prophet. This *Spirit of the Lord* then here mentioned was not the PROPHE-TICK Spirit.

When the *predicting Prophet* is described the Expressions † are more pompous; thus we read of *the Vision of Isaiah, the Son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, &c. The Word of the Lord came unto David's Seer*. These Terms were applied to none but such as saw into *Futurity*, and had the miraculous Gift of representing to the People Things to come; and in Token of ‡ this Gift, either they wrought *Miracles*; or *appealed* to the Completion of some Fact foretold by them; which when it came to pass, was to the People *one*

* Judges xi. 29.

|| xi. 1.

† 1 Isai. 1, 2, 3.

‡ 1 Kings xviii. 36, 37, 38.

Sign of the Reality of their Missions. * In these Terms, *Micaiah* opposed the false Prophets, who were deluding the King of *Israel*. He tells *Zedekiah* one of his Opponents, that he should have Conviction enough of his (*Micaiah's*) being inspired, *When he should go into an inner Chamber to hide himself*. And he tells the KING, *that if he did return at all in Peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me, and he said hearken, O People, every one of you*. Such Circumstances as these are generally the Marks of a Prophet, in the most proper and exalted Meaning of the Word.

Where there are no such *Circumstances* added in Scripture, the Word PROPHEET is nothing akin to *miraculous* divine Inspiration, but is to be connected with some of the *lower* Ideas of the Prophet's Office, such as have been before described, or such as obtains most frequently in the New Testament, which shall be here, in the last Place, more particularly explained. The *Idea*, I mean, is that of the Prophet in the Office, of an *Orator* or *Preacher*. Thus we read in *Nehemiah*, *thou hast appointed Prophets to preach of thee in Jerusalem, i. e. to make Speeches*. In which Sense I observed before, that one of the Jewish *Rabbies* understood the *Hebrew* Word, and in which Sense the *Greek* Word in the New Testament † is generally to be taken: Thus it is said of *Judas* and *Silas*, Legates from the first Council, upon the Controversy with the Gentiles, that being *Prophets, i. e. eloquent Preachers*,

* 1 Kings xxii. 25 and 28.

† Acts xv. 32.

they *exhorted* the Brethren *with many Words* and *confirmed them*. The Reason for their interposing, according to the *Historian*, is taken from the *Nature* of their Office. There must have been a Fitness then in their Office for this Purpose; a natural Connexion between it, and the Business, which called upon them to exert it: But their Business was to set People right in a Matter of *Debate* and *Reason*: The Notion of a Prophet here then was only that of *Reasoner*. For otherwise these Prophets might have used *divine Authority* with the People (a shorter Method than the Use of *so many Words*) *to have confirmed them*.

St. PAUL's Description of the Prophets in the New Testament, as a *common* Order subsisting in the Church, puts it past a Doubt, that they were only an *Order of Preachers*; without any Thing *miraculous* in their Characters. For he says they were not designed by God Almighty, for a Means of Conviction to Infidels, like those, who had the miraculous Gift of Tongues. But had they been in an *extraordinary* Manner *divinely* inspired, they would have been as much a *Wonder* as the other. It is a plain Proof then, that they pretended not to *miraculous* divine Inspiration. * Tongues, *i. e.* the miraculous Gift of speaking divers Languages, *was for a Sign to them that believed not, but Prophecy serveth not for* (the Miraculous Conviction of) *Unbelievers, but for them, which believe*. And all that the Apostle

* 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

says of this Service was, *that * it was speaking to Men to Edification, Exhortation, and Comfort.* And whether they did this well or not, the *other were to judge.* † If another had a *better Apprehension* of the Thing, the first *Preacher* was to hold his Peace: For he adds ‡ *the Spirits of the Prophets are Subject to the Prophets.* A plain Proof, that these *Spirits* were none but *their own.* For a distinct Being has a distinct *Will*; and we cannot force the Will of another Man, much less that of another *Spirit*, which in the Case of Inspiration, *must* be in all its Faculties our Superiour. Upon the whole then, it appears that the *ordinary Church-Prophets* of the New Testament, or those, who spoke in the Assemblies, had no Pretence to miraculous divine Inspiration. One would wonder therefore, by what irreligious Boldness, and Blasphemous Presumption, § our *Preaching Prophets* now-a-days pretend to it. If it was not necessary in the *Infancy* of the *Church*, they can never with Reason say, that it must be necessary now, in Places, where Churches are grown to Maturity, and by *Law established.* With what View this Opinion is maintained one cannot favourably conceive. Whether it be the *Design* of these People to undermine the *Name*, and *Faith* of Christians is best known to God and their Consciences, but that they do in Fact join Hands with *Infidels* is certain, by their fixing upon Religion those very Falshoods and Absurdities,

* Ver. 3. † Ver. 29. ‡ 32. § See Appendix No. III.

which

which in the Esteem of the Infidel Party * tend directly to its Disgrace and Ruin. Whatever their Designs may be, we shall be able at least to form some Opinion of the Nature and Tendency of their Conduct, after that I have in the last Place laid down.

Certain Rules for the Discovery and Conviction of false Prophets.

The Means of discovering a false Prophet, are either his Words or Actions.

St. JOHN † in the Verse following the Text, bids us form a Judgment of a Man by the Matter of his Doctrine. Hereby, saith he, know we the Spirit of God. And in the Old Testament, the Matter of a Man's Doctrine is made the Test of his Mission in Opposition to the Power of working Miracles, (Deut. xiii.) If there arise among you a Prophet or a Dreamer of Dreams, and giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder : And the Sign or the Wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee saying, let us go after other Gods—and let us serve them. Thou shalt not hearken unto the Words of that Prophet or Dreamer of Dreams. For the Lord your God proveth you—Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his Commandments, and obey his Voice.—And that Prophet or Dreamer of Dreams shall be put to Death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God. To the same Purpose St.

* See an Infidel Book entitled, *Christianity not founded on Argument* ; wherein the Author pretends to defend Religion upon the Principles of Methodists, and exposes it with the utmost Scorn.

† 1 Ep.

Paul admonishes the *Galatians*, when some had troubled them and were perverting the Gospel of Christ. *Tho' we or an Angel from Heaven*, saith he, *preach any other Gospel than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* Before our Reception therefore of any *Prophet*; it is indispensably our Duty in the first Place, to look particularly, to the Matter of his *Speech*, or *Doctrine*, as one Means of forming a right Judgment concerning him.

And the Marks we are to look to are such as these.

1. *Whether his Account of himself be not above his real Character?*

2. *Whether his other Doctrines be not for their Matter false and incredible?*

3. *Whether what he says, upon any Subject, be in Point of Propriety and Discretion, suited and agreeable to a Prophet's Name, and the Dignity of an holy Function?*

And in judging of these important *Articles*, we are to be guided as the *Matter* shall require.

Either by the common Principles of *Reason*—

By the *Holy Scripture* taken in the general, as the *Word of God*:—Or by particular *Passages* collected from the same.

Or in Cases, where these are silent, and our own Reason not capable of judging; it is safest to follow the Advice of the *Schools* of the *Prophets*, and the lawful *Priesthood* of the Nation.

First, We are to consider, whether the Prophet's

phet's *Account of himself*, be not *above* his real Character.

The different *Degrees* of such as promiscuously bore the Name of *Prophet* in Scripture have been before distinguished. Those, which we have generally most Occasion to note are, or would seem to be, of the Order of haranguing Prophets, or those, which preach to the People. But as there is much Reason to doubt whether many, that are thus employed, have any just Title to exercise that Office, it may be proper in the *first* Place, to examine their Claim even to this, and determine its Merits.

Every *publick* Teacher of all Orders and Degrees of Men amongst us, ought to receive his Commission, either from *Gospel*—Ordinances, or be authorised * by Powers and Privileges granted by the *Laws* of the Realm, to this or that *Society*. And whoever assumes the Office of a preaching Prophet or Teacher, not warranted by *Gospel* Ordinances, or countenanced by the *Laws* of the Land; is, with Respect to the *Gospel*, an *Antichristian* Teacher and *false Prophet*, and with Respect to the *State* a *Mover of Sedition*, and a mutinous Disturber of the publick Peace, that acts in Contempt, and Defiance of the *Laws* established. This is the Case of those who intrude themselves as *haranguing* PROPHETS, not having a convincing Testimony, that they are truly called, or countenanced by due Authority.

* Art. xxiii. of the Church of *England*—It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office, &c. See Ap. No. IV.

With

With regard to those, who receiving *proper* Orders to instruct the People, do yet vainly magnify their Office beyond the *Truth*, and add something *fictitious* to their Character, by high Pretences to miraculous Inspiration, they too are *false* Prophets as well as the former.—For in Virtue of their Office no miraculous Inspiration was ever promised them; nor upon that Account ever granted in the apostolick Age, when the Church, if ever, stood most in need of it.

These *Circumstances* are to be regarded, when we consider in the *first* Place, whether the Prophet's *Account* of *himself* be not above his real Character.

When we look to his *other Doctrines*, we may judge in great Part by the Principles of *Reason*, whether they be *true* or *false*, or whether the Man be *turning us from the Lord our God*. For he is actually engaged in this *diabolical* Employment, if he *misrepresents* the divine Nature, making him so * *foolish* as to overlook the obvious Distinctions of *Vice* and *Virtue*; and so *unjust* as to set no manner of Estimation upon *Virtue*, nay even to accept of *Vice* before it. Such Doctrines we can condemn by the Light of *Reason*, independent of *Revelation*.

And by the Character of the *Holy* Scriptures, taken in *general* as the *Word of God*, we may judge of a false Prophet by such *Marks* as these.

† If he *makes the Scriptures contradict them-*

* See Appendix, No. 5.

† Art. xx. The Church may not so expound one Place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another, &c.

selfes, or deduces from thence any Doctrines destructive to *moral Virtue*, and the *Peace* and *Happiness* of Human Society.

For we know by the Light of *Reason*, (and upon the Footing of *Reason*, we receive the *Scriptures* as the Word of God) that the *Scripture* cannot *contradict* itself. Therefore if it say, that *Christ* will *render to every Man according to his Works*, Matt. xvi. 27.) and that *Faith* without *Works* is *dead*, it can never be supposed to mean, that *Faith* can save a Man without good *Works*. If the *Scripture* uttered *Contradictions*, it were not fit to be believed. For one Side of a *Contradiction* must be false. But we know that the Text of *Scripture* is to be believed, and therefore by the general Character of *Scripture*, as *the Word of God*, we know, that he who charges it with *Contradictions* is a *false Prophet*.

And by the same Character we know that no Doctrines can come from it, destructive to *moral Virtue*, or the *Order*, *Peace*, and *Happiness* of Society.

Upon these Points too, even the *particular* Passages of Holy *Scripture* expressly oppose the Doctrine of our *modern* Prophets. With Regard to *moral Virtue*; there are Passages, which enjoin it as * *indispensably* necessary to future *Happiness*: And with Regard to our *domestick* and *civil* Conduct, it is prescribed that *we study to be quiet, and to do our own Business*. If we do not *work*, we are not to *eat*. And it is only while

* Heb. xii. 14.

we are merry, and at leisure that St. JAMES advises us to be *singing of Psalms*.

And thus we may make the *Scriptures* the Touch-stone for the Trial of false Doctrine.

Where those are silent, and our own *Reason* not capable of judging, it is safest to follow the Advice of the *Schools of the Prophets*, and the lawful *Priesthood* of the Nation, for when we cannot tell how to preserve our Health, we apply to the regular *Physician*, and when we are to seek in Matters of Right to some approved *Counsellor*: And therefore by Parity of Reason, when we are in Doubt in Religious Matters, we should consult our *regular* and *approved* Pastors, who are appointed by *Laws divine* and *human*, to be our Guides and Directors on such Subjects. The *false* Prophets are so sensible, that the Opinion of these will lie against them, that it is generally one of their first Artifices to decry, and abuse the *national* Clergy. It will be well worth while to observe upon such Occasions, whether their Attacks are not against *some* of the *best* and *ablest*; such as among the wiser and better Sort of all Denominations, have always born for Piety and Learning, * the highest Reputation. If this be the Case, it is almost an *infallible Mark* of a *False Prophet*. For what other Opinion can we have of those Men, who oppose the best and ablest of God's Ministers, but that their Doctrines are opposite to the Doctrines of these, and consequently in Proportion as false, and as much to

* See Appendix, No. VI.

be avoided, as those of the other demand our Attention? Thus far the *Rules* of Judging, whether the Doctrines of a reputed Prophet be *false* or *incredible*.

To discern in the *third* Place, whether what he says upon any Subject, be in Point of Propriety and Discretion, suited and *agreeable* to a Prophet's Name and the *Dignity* of an *holy* Function: We need only bear in Mind that Precept in Scripture. *If any Man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God*; not only conformably to their *Doctrine*, or in their *Words*, but according to their *Manner*; with that Fitness of Expression, and *prudent* Sentiment, which remarkably appear in the *Holy Scriptures*, though written in *distant* Times, and originally to People of another *Language*. Now if this be required of every Speaker, we must surely expect it in an high Degree of all, who affect to be considered as more significant than ordinary, and decry the rest of their Brethren. In their Discourses, and Writings, there should appear such a Degree of *proper* Eloquence, such *Authority*, *Order* and *Decency*, as might render their *Speech* and *Preaching*, a Kind of *Standard* to Christian Orators.

Were this a *Trial* in a *Court* of Judicature, a Person might not only *arraign* upon every Article, but be minute in Point of *Evidence*: Particularly upon the present Head, there might be produced some extraordinary Examples of the surprizing *Weakness* of some, who would pass for *inspired* Teachers. The Expressions indeed have

have been already noted in a proper Manner another Way, * but if they had not, they must here escape a particular Censure. Because their Folly and Impropriety is so extreme, that in a Place so serious, as this, they cannot be mentioned.

Having said thus much of their *Doctrine*, which is generally the most glaring *Diagnostick* of false Prophets, I have only some few *RULES* to add for judging of them by their *Conduct* and *Actions* upon the same *Principles*, that we examined their *Doctrines*, and shall then conclude.

Remarks on this Subject, may be reduced to certain *general Heads*, as *first*.

It may be enquired whether a Man's Conduct be *consistent* with *common Sense*. For as it happened in the Days of the Prophet *Hosea*, it may happen in ours, that a *Fool* should affect to be a Prophet, and the *Madman* talk of *Inspiration*: And then by scanning their Conduct, we may learn their Weakness. And if it appear, that God hath disqualified any Person for performing the *common Offices* of *Life*, with that *Discretion*, which the world requires, it can never be imagined, that he should make Choice of such *defective Instruments* to share his *secret Counsels*, or plan his glorious *Dispensations* †. Such People indeed are generally by their own Discourse of as high Importance as the greatest

* See Appendix, No. VII.

† See Appendix, No. VIII.

Prophets, big with as mighty Things, and as much concerned in their Production. We are at Liberty however to disbelieve them in *both* Cases. *First*, for want of *Evidence*, from other Quarters, that the Things are *probable*: And in the next Place, because considering the *Temper* and *Spirit* of the Men, we know, that there is no Credit to be given People in their *Condition*.

Besides Examining the *Consistency* of their *SCHEMES* with *common Sense*. We must consider, whether they be conducted with *common Honesty*. For no *Administration* can be looked upon, as coming from *God*, or carried on under, his Direction, if it be supported by such Methods, or tend to such Purposes, as the good Part of Mankind disapprove of, and abhor.

The *End* of all *Impostors* however disguised or dissembled, is ever some Kind of worldly *Gain* or Point of *Interest*. In the Course of their *Conduct*, it is difficult for them, to conceal their *VIEWS* *entirely*. If they are actuated by the Love of *Fame* or Popularity; their Design will betray itself by *Ospretation* and *Vanity*: If filthy *Lucre* be the Motive, the Love of it will appear, either by the *Use* they make of it, or the *Means* of getting it. For Instance, if it be gathered by Arts inconsistent with common *Humanity*, if wrung from the *Poor*, to whom it should be given, distraind from the *Mite* of the helpless *Widows*, and picked from the Bread of weeping and defrauded *Orphans*.

Besides

Besides *Inhumanity* in the Methods of getting Wealth, One may observe in such People a Kind of *Artifice*, not only to be abhorred of a *Christian*, but to be despised of a generous *Heathen*: An *Artifice*, which the Scripture anciently hath charged on them, that of *creeping into Houses and leading captive silly Women laden with Crimes* * *i. e.* applying to the weakest of our *Species* in their weakest Moments, an Argument that they are afraid of *human Nature*, where it appears *steady* and *upright*, armed with its proper Strength and the Use of a *right Understanding*. § Their Designs even here are not without a *Mark* to make them visible, because their Haunt is generally where their Prey is expected, and in the Place where the *Carcass* lies, there like the *Eagles* they gather together.

If *such Men* as these there be, and such Men as these, it is loudly complained *there are*, can we look upon them as any better than *Impostors*? Can we reconcile such Practices with their vaunted Speeches?—Is it to these the HOLY SPIRIT (whose Errand is never *trivial*) de-

* The Scripture adds, that they are *ever-learning, and never coming at the Knowledge of the Truth*: Which shews such a Degree of Weakness, as absolutely to require the Management of other People. And therefore as St. Paul calls the Husband the Head of the Wife, I should advise any industrious Tradesman, who happens to be tied to one of these *silly* Creatures, to exert his *Authority*, and insist upon being both her *Husband*, and her *Priest*. For if she fall into bad Hands, such Agitations of the Mind may drive her to Distraction, or give great Disturbance to his own Peace, and that of his Family.

§ This alludes to the Situation of their Conventicles and Meeting-Houses.

scends

ascends continually with as much *Pomp*, as when on the Day of *Pentecost*, he rushed from Heaven to inspire CHRIST's true APOSTLES—or is it for the Honour of the *Christian* Name, that they will have these their *Follies* condemned, as they are by their *Superiours*, and all *sober Christians* yet published in *Gath* and *Askalon*, to make themselves at once the Scorn and Tools of Infidels?

It has been the Concern of two vigilant and pious * *Prelates*, and it is the Business of every inferior *Pastor* and *Curate* to guard his People from this insinuating and restless *Leaven*. It is in the mean Time the Duty of the People, to pray for such a Portion of God's *Holy Spirit*, as may enable them to distinguish between the empty *Sounds* of wild *Enthusiasm*, and the *Solid Truths* of the *Word* of GOD. That so the *Religion* of CHRIST, which hath hitherto been a *reasonable* Religion, may not offend the *sensible* and *good* Part of *Mankind*, by being *disguised* among the *Vulgar*, or deformed, by the *offensive Doctrines* of *Blasphemous*, or *Ignorant*, of *deluding*, or *deluded* Men.

Now to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be ascribed all Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now and for evermore.

* DR. GIBSON, late Bishop of *London*, and DR. LAVINGTON, the present Lord Bishop of *Exeter*.

The END of the Sermon.

A P-

T H E
A P P E N D I X:

C O N T A I N I N G,

*Some Specimens of the Blasphemous Doctrines, and
Delusions of METHODISTS, and Methodistical
Writers, noted and censured in the foregoing SERMON.*

N U M B E R I.

Of Mock POSSESSIONS and INSPIRATIONS.

THERE have been Reports lately of strange Experiments tried by the *Methodists* upon Women in *Hysterick Fits*, and young Persons in *Convulsions*, under Pretence of *exorcising*; or treating that *Weakness*, as the *Possession* of a Devil, which is only a *Bodily Disorder*: But these Things being transacted in private, and some of their Conventicles at certain unseasonable Times of Meeting, being close shut up, contrary to LAW, the World is only left to infer; that something is doing, which will not admit of *publick* Inspection, though they cannot tell the Particulars, but imagine the Business to be of this Sort, as the common People among the *Methodists* are full of such Notions, and their Teachers countenance the same in Print, Mr. WESLEY speaking of a Child about *seven* Years old, gives us a Relation, which shews he believed her Case to be a *Possession* of one Sort or other, he calls it the *Spirit*, or *Revelation* of the Lord, but it is strangely worded,—"The next Sunday Night, the Lord revealed himself (says he) to her in an amazing Manner, and for some Hours she was so wrapped up in his *Spirit*, that we knew not where she was——sinking to nothing in the Discovery of his Majesty, and Glory in Jesus Christ, her eternal Portion——and, by the uncommon Earnestness, the Spirit gave her to *wrestle* for the Churches, she thought that

that an uncommon Work will be wrought on the Earth. Many such Instances of the Out-pouring of the Spirit have we among us."

See the late Bishop of *London's* Observations on the Conduct, &c. of the *Methodists*, Pag. 19.

And P. 10. for Evidences of the Co-operation of the Holy Spirit, by sudden * Agonies, † Roarings and Screamings, ‡ Tremblings, § Droppings-down, ¶ Ravings and Madnesses; into which their Hearers have been cast; according to the Relations given of them in the Journals referred to?

* Mr. *Whitfield's* Journal VI. p. 36.—VII. p. 57, 69, 75. Mr. *Wesley's* Journal III. Pag. 26, 41, 45, 59, 64, 95. † Mr. *Whitfield's* Journal VII. pag. 74. Mr. *Wesley's* Journal III. pag. 40, 44, 50, 62, 79, 83, 92, 93, 94. ‡ Pag. 41, 43, 50, 58, 61, 93. § Mr. *Whitfield's* Journal VII. pag. 12, 60. Mr. *Wesley's* Journal III. pag. 41, 43, 46, 50, 58, 59, 61, 64, 65, 83. ¶ Pag. 44, 50, 88, 90, 92, 93.

N U M B E R II.

HERE follows as an Instance of *direct* REVELATION, the famous Letter, which was read in Sermon-time at *St. Saviour's*, the biggest Church in *Southwark*, and then crouded with *Methodists*, by one Mr. *Jones*, who since the Death of Dr. *Slocock*, has had *Permission* to act as *Chaplain* there, it is taken from the printed Copy, publickly sold in the *Borough*, for the Edification of such of the *Parishoners* as were absent, they being generally excluded their Seats by the lawless Rabble, who are his Followers.

From the Mansions above,

My dear Christian Friend and Brother,

SUCH you was, when I was cloathed with Mortality, and such you are yet, though I am now in an unembodied State. The Change there is made as to me, makes no Alteration as to the Relation there is between us. We are both Members of Christ's mystical Body. We were both Members of the Church militant together, and we shall both join the Church triumphant. I am only come hither a little before you, soon shall I see my dear *Fido*, and my other dear weeping Friends, and rejoice with them for ever. Don't be afraid. Jesus Christ is a faithful Saviour. He will keep that which you have committed to him. You may trust him both in Life and Death. Death is the most trying

Sea-

Season; but here the dear Mediator will not fail you. I am an Evidence of it. There is a Solemnity in Death which cannot be expressed, yet the Passage is safe. Oh what a glorious Change! What new surprizing Scenes appear! No sooner was my Breath gone, but a Convoy of ministring Spirits, who were attending, conducted me to the Mansions of Glory; where the ever-adorable Jesus, with a Smile inconceivably transporting, invited me to take Possession of that Happiness which he purchased at so dear a Rate as his own Blood. And now, my Brother, think, yea think if you can, what I now feel, what I now enjoy! Did *Paul* say it was better to be with Christ than in the Body? I now know it, Did the distant View of Glory, make *Moses* refuse the Grandeur of *Egypt*? No Wonder, when it is so great, so great that none can tell it. Oh the Exchange I have made! Oh the Happiness that Grace has exalted me to! I am now no more watering my Couch with Tears, but filled with Fullness of Joys which will remain for evermore. I am now no more sipping at the Streams, but drinking a full Draught at the Fountain-Head. I am no more clogged with a Lump of Clay, or pining under Disorders and Pains of Body; I am set at full and perfect Liberty, and am got where Sorrow never comes. I am now perfect in Holiness. I am no more subject to Sin; every Faculty of my Soul is freed from the sad Contagion, and all find sweet Employment in the noble Services of Heaven. Now I see clearly that mysterious, but glorious Scheme of Salvation through Jesus Christ; its Beauties ravish my Soul, and fill me with Admiration. I now see the various Beauties of Providence, and find the highest Entertainment in the Views of what once so much puzzled and perplexed me. I now feel a divine Ardor filling my whole Soul, and running through every Service, without that Slothfulness and Indolence which once attended me, and was but feebly complained of, I am no more that formal, indifferent, languishing Creature I was on Earth, but my Soul now feels the Fire of Divine Love, which burns with a perpetual and uninterrupted Flame, being fed with the constant and glorious Manifestations of the Love of him that sitteth upon the Throne and the Lamb. Here I have found your dear Parent, and many of my dear and valuable Friends. What a numerous Assembly, and all harmonious. Here's no Envy, no Jealousy, no Shyness or Coldness, but perfect Love, and a sweet Contention, who shall strike the loudest String,

and sing Grace! Grace! the loudest. Here are no deprecating Speeches of Jesus Christ, no Attempts to rob him of his Glory; but all as with one Voice cry out, *Worthy is the Lamb to receive, &c.* Oh where am I got! What is my Happiness! Beyond Expression! I was once a Warrior, now a Conqueror, yea more than a Conqueror. No more upon Mount Pisgab. I have got over Jordan. I am beholding the Glory of Christ; and, in fine, my Vessel is as full as it will hold. My Pen cannot describe the Glories of Paradise. Oh my Friend, be trimming your Lamp. Hasten the Time, fly away ye lingering Moments, and bring my dear Fido, and my other dear Friends, to the Arms of Jesus, to see and enjoy what I enjoy.

And now what wait I for? To see my dear Friends with me, to see the Number of God's Elect compleated, to hear the Trumpet sound on the glorious Resurrection Morning. What is my Employment but to love, adore, and praise throughout Eternity? Farewel till I see you here. Go on your Way rejoicing. Christ has your Inheritance safe in his Hands, and you shall surely have it. Oh love him, love him more and more, and lay out yourself for him. My Love to your dear Companion; tell her to press forward, and she shall not be disappointed. Adieu, adieu.

Your eternally affectionate Friend,

And triumphant Brother,

SAMUEL HAYWARD.

REMARKS upon the LETTER.

As this Letter has thus undergone a double Publication, the FIRST from the Pulpit, the OTHER from the Press, we must imagine, that the Publisher was heartily concerned, that the World should believe the Contents of it. But if so, let us enquire whether he believed the Contents of it himself, to wit; that it came from the Place from whence it was dated, *i. e.* the Mansions above, that it was a true and real Description of Transactions in the other World, penned, and composed and communicated by the Ministry of the Spirit of a Person departed, as it is plainly, and in direct Terms asserted in the Letter itself.

If he *did* believe all this, he is a Madman and a very dangerous Leader to such of his Followers as are in the same Condition: But if he *did not* believe it, then his Character must appear much blacker; because, if he was not mad, the whole

whole Affair was the Effect of some *Design*, and that a very bad one, *impious* with Respect to God, and *villainous* with Respect to Men, as being no other than to try how far the *common People* might be imposed upon, and made subservient to evil Purposes.

But if it be a *curfed* Thing to lead those, who are deprived of their Bodily Sight from the safe Way, that is direct before them: How much more unpardonable must it be, to seduce a Number of poor *blind Souls* from the Paths of right Reason? and when they were expecting to hear, what they call the *true Gospel of CHRIST*, to make such a cruel Experiment upon their *Credulity*, by presenting them a *Revelation* of another Sort, and in the pretended Character of their *Pastor*, and Guide, to ascend the Pulpit, and deliver that, as an *Oracle of God*, which he knew in his Heart to be an *abominable Lie*.

With what HORROR must all *honest* and *sensible* Men behold this *Hypocrite*; in the very *Act of Delusion*, lifting up his Eyes to *Heaven*, and thundering out *Damnation* to others, while he *himself* was offending against common *Honesty*.

Were there no *Officers* of the Parish to take Notice of his Conduct, and report it to his *Superiors*?

No *Superior* to restrain such an IMPOSTOR as this? who could thus abuse his Trust, and prostitute his *Character* as a *Priest* of the Church of ENGLAND to serve the *vilest* Purposes, to delude the People he undertook to instruct, and make Religion a Jest, by mixing it with *lying Tales* and *pretended REVELATIONS*.

N U M B E R II.

An Account of *pretended* extraordinary Inspirations vouchsafed to Mr. WHITFIELD, and accompanying him in his *Office* as a *Preacher*.

Journal I. Pag. 44. "In the Midst of my Discourse, the Power of the Lord Jesus came upon me—Pag. 46. God gave me particularly toward the Close of my Sermon to speak with *divine Energy*.—*Journal* VII. Pag. 66. The LORD gave me the Text, I preached on, just before the Meeting, directed me to a Method as I was going up the Pulpit Stairs, and enabled me to discourse with an uncommon Clearness, Freedom and Power,—Heard of one that received the *Holy Ghost* immediately upon my preaching Christ,—the Divine Presence was strong upon me." &c.

Lord Bishop of London's Observations, Pag. 14, 15.
N U M.

NUMBER IV.

Notwithstanding their *Professions* of Obedience to the Church of England, it is evident, that they have attempted to set up a new Form of Church-government over ASSOCIATIONS, and *monthly* and *quarterly* MEETINGS, under the Directions of *Superintendents*, *Exhorters*, and *Moderators* through the Kingdom: In Contempt of the *Authority* of our BISHOPS, and without any *Authority* from the State.

“ Our *Saviour* was much with me, teaching and helping me (Mr. *Whitfield*) to fill my Place of *Moderator* in a particular Manner.” Then for VISITATIONS—“ in the mean Time I visit the *Classes*, I have settled *Stewards* and *Visitors*,—a *Visitor* of eight Counties,—I think to move hence and visit the Churches in *Wiltshire*.

Observations, Pag. 20, 21, 22.

NUMBER V.

Atheistical DOCTRINES and PROPOSITIONS tending to destroy the *essential* Attributes of GOD, and ruin his Character as JUDGE of the World; Being directly *contradictory* to our SAVIOUR's Declaration, that *he will reward every Man according to his Works*, and quite destructive to the *Morality*, and therefore, to the well-being of a State.

“ Be persuaded that there is no clogging *Qualification*, no *Worth* to be possessed, no DUTY to be performed, in Order to your full Participation of Christ and his Riches: Only believe, and they are all your own: Not by legal Works, and laborious perquisites.” *Theron and Aspasio*. Vol. 3. Dial. 16—Pag. 29, one would think by this, that it is just the same, whether we do right or wrong—No say THEY if you attempt to do right, you do very wrong.

“ He who attempts to do any Thing easy or difficult, under the Notion of an Act of believing, or any other Act, in Order to his Acceptance with God, only heaps up more *Wrath* against himself.”—And again,

“ The whole New Testament speaks aloud, that as to the Matter of Acceptance with God, there is no Difference between one Man and another:—No Difference betwixt the most accomplished Gentleman, and the most infamous Scoundrel:—No Difference betwixt the most virtuous Lady, and the vilest Prostitute:—No Difference betwixt the most Reverend Judge, and the most odious Criminal standing convicted before him, and receiving the just
“ Sen-

“ Sentence of Death at his Mouth :---In a Word, no Difference betwixt the most fervent Devotee, and the “ greatest Ringleader in Profaneness and Excess.” A plain Account of Faith, &c.

NUMBER VI.

Abuse of the Clergy in general and of the great LIGHTS of the Church in particular.

“ Mr. Whitfield (Journal IV. Pag. 38.) addressing himself to his Brother Teachers, and speaking of the established Clergy, desires that they would not suffer the “ Sheep to “ be as though they had no Shepherd, or worse than none, “ those blind Leaders of the Blind”——I believe there are few Clergymen, but what have better Eyes than he, —— But however he says Pag. 32. “ This Afternoon I was “ carried out much in my Testimony against the *unchristian* “ Principles and Practices of the Generality of our Clergy” ——I hope our *Principles* are better than those in the foregoing Number, for if such be true——It is no Manner of Concern, what may be our *Practice*, or theirs either.

Abuse of the great LIGHTS of the Church.

Mr. Whitfield's Journal Pag. 19. It cannot be expressed how many carnal Hearts were disturbed by my Testimony against Archbishop Tillotson.—But before I have done, I do not despair of seeing People bring his Works, as they once brought the Books of curious Arts, and burn them before all Men.—Journal VII. Pag. 2. The Man's Wife was a great Admirer of Archbishop Tillotson, but having her Eyes now opened to discern Spiritual Things, can no longer take up with such Husks, fit only for carnal, unawakened, unbelieving Reasoners, to eat.

After having laid down his own Scheme he adds, this the Author of *the whole Duty of Man*, was wholly ignorant of; otherwise he would not have laid such a Foundation—There is no Hopes of bringing People to a right Knowledge of the Gospel, till their favourite, though erroneous Authors are discountenanced and laid aside, Whitfield's Letter from new Brunswick. See Observations, Pag. 11, 12, 13.

NUMBER VII.

A Specimen of the RELIGIOUS-AMOROUS, or melting and rapturous Expressions. Mr. Whitfield asks the Women, how they feel themselves when their Lovers approach them—See London

London Mag. for July 1739. "Their Disciples are not only
 "Lambs—but dear Lambs—poor, dear precious Lambs—
 "poor little Lambs,—sweet Lambs,—O what a sweet Love-
 "feast we had last *Wednesday*-night! a sweet Love-feast,
 "the Holy Ghost came down with such Power, that the
 "dear Lambs could scarce contain themselves.—a choice
 "Love-feast—a precious Love-feast,—I send you a *thousand*
 "Kisses."—Pity! that such an inspired APOSTLE should
 prove so extravagantly foolish and ridiculous.

He sends his wanton Lambs a *thousand* Kisses :
 Pray! to the *Masters*?—Sir, or to the *Misses*?

NUMBER VIII.

IMAGINATION of some GREAT WORK, of which God
 makes them the Instruments.

Mr. *Wesley* (*Journal* II. pag. 39.) speaking of the Con-
 versation he had with some *Moravians* in *Holland*, adds,
 "The rest of the Day we spent with all the Brethren and
 "Sisters, in hearing the wonderful Work which God is be-
 "ginning to work all over the Earth.—And to the same
 Effect Mr. *Whitfield* (*Journal* III. p. 107.) Nothing con-
 firms me more in my Opinion, that God intends to work a
 great Work upon the Earth, than to find how his Children of
 all Denominations every where wrestle in Prayer for ME.

To the same Purpose are the Declarations in the Letters.

I believe that God hath a great Work to do on the Earth,
 No. 1. Vol. 3. pag. 30.

I believe, our Lord is going to do a great Work indeed,
 No. 2. Vol. 2. pag. 49.

I am sure God is going to do great Things among us.

NUMBER IX.

An Account of the pretended extraordinary Descent of the
 Holy Ghost upon Mr. *Whitfield*, and his Assembly.

Pag. 72. I was much carried out; I felt the Power of
 God come upon me, and I spoke with Demonstration of
 the Spirit to the Hearer's Souls.

Journal VI. Pag. 23. Before I had done, the Power
 of the Lord came upon the Congregation, the Holy Ghost
 overshadowed them, and a gracious melting was visible in
 most that heard.

Pag. 30. Towards the Conclusion of my Discourse,
 God's Spirit came upon the Preacher and the People.

N U M.

N U M B E R X.

A Specimen of some Papers given up in St. Saviour's Church, shewing the *Notions* of the poor People to *correspond* with the delusive *Artifices* of their Leaders, exposed in the NUMBERS aforegoing. The Grammar, and Spelling are just as they came, from these *wise Children* of God.

Sir, The Prayers of this Congregation (and yours in particular) is desired for several notorious Sinners and especially for one here present (who has been partly awakened by the late preaching of the Reverend Mr. Jones,) that the Lord would be pleased to shew him the State and Condition of his Soul.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desired for a young Man who having been made sensible of his Sins thought to Get an Interest in Christ which God haveing not thought fit to Give him, he has falling like the Sow to his Vomit and like the Dog that was washed to Wallow in the Mire.

Prays is Earnestly Desired for a woman who In Providence is Called from the word and into a *carnal* Family that the Lord would be Pleased to keep her near to himself from the Power of Temptation and give her Zeal for his Glory.

Prays are desired fra tow Wiow theat the Lord jesus wold be ther Speritual husband.

The prayers of this Congregation is desired for a parson that desires to know har Intrests In the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Prayers are desired for A Backslider distressed in Soul that god for Christ sake would once more to restore her.

Your prayers are desire by a woeman that she may neuer reast all she reast in christ.

Prayers is desired for one who hear the word beg that the word may come with *power* to his soul.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desired for a woman that God would *manifest* himself unto her and *Shew* her the True State of her Soul and grant that the Residue of her life may be Dedicated wholly to his Servis.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desir'd for a Young man who has taken hold of the Plow but the Devil and his Companions wants to tempt him to look Back.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desir'd for a Young man who the Devill is very Busy with.

The prayers of this Congregations is desired for a grate Sinner that Wonts to Repent but cannot beg the prayers of all good christian that it may pleas the all almighty for to tack a way her hart of Stone and give her a hart of flesh.

Your prayers are desire for to old people that know nothin of god

The Prayers of the Congregation are desired for a Woman under a deep Sense of Guilt and Sin that Lord Jesus would be pleased to *manifest* himself to her. *Quare*, What is here meant by *manifest*?

Sir

Sr a young man who has been a Slave to Sin 25 years and the Lord has Lately visited him and by *free grace* has brought him back desires to Return thanks for the same.

Prayers are Desired for one Who Desires to know Christ *Experimentally* and the *Power* of his Resurrection.

For a poor man that is in debt and is greatly distressed by his creditors that the Lord would be pleas'd to stop there hands.

Sr your prayers are desired for one that Cannot pray for himself.

Sir your prayers are desired for those how are a going a long journey to see a dear Relation that it would please god to preserve them in there journey and give them an agreeable sight with hearts *wanted* in his praise for all the Benefits we daely receive.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desir'd by a Young man for the *Conversion* of his *father Mother and Sister* and having a Young Brother he Begs of God that as he Grows in Years so he may Grow in Grace.

The prayers of this Congregation is desired for one that the Lord would be pleas'd to give her the Spirit of prayer and Supplication.

The Prayers of this Congregation is Desir'd by a Young man for Converting the of his Sister who was once a follower of Christ but now follows the World the flesh and the Devil.

The Prayers of this Congregation are desired for a Youth who is deprived of many Opportunities of hearing the *Word*, that the Lord would be pleas'd to restore them unto him again.

One who humbly desires to know christ and the power of his resurrection.

The *Reader* may see by the Papers here published, that these poor People resolve the Whole of Religion into *sanctified* MANIFESTATIONS, REVELATIONS, ANTICIPATIONS, FEELINGS, or EXPERIENCES; which all end in *passive* QUIETISM. The only *active* Part of their Religion, is what they call *bearing the Word*; by which they mean the *Nonsense* of some impudent *Enthusiast*; who assumes Authority to delude the rest. As to the *Practice of PIETY, social DUTIES, and moral VIRTUE*; it is plain, that they are not so much as mentioned in their SYSTEM, which is here attested by their own Writing, and delivered in their own Words.

